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Polydore and Aurora.

Præludium Matutinum.

Weary, unwilling, the eyelids droop, though slumber has left them;
Polydore rises alone, sits on his couch with a sigh;
Long he has wandered in hope, pursuing a vision of splendor,
Filled is his heart with a dream, whether he wake or he sleep.
Soon he sets forth in the dark for the hills, for the tops of the mountains,
Toil, which wearies the world, brings him his only repose.
Troubled he is with an image, sweet image that drives him to wander,
Polydore is not too old, is not too young for the quest.

Up the rough pathway he climbs, which leads him away from his cabin,
Down he hastes to the dell, through the wild gloom of the glen,
Forward he steps full-hearted, his lot is ever to wander,
Polydore's locks are still brown, shot through with silvery strands.
Dawn is dreamily touching the farthest tops of the mountains,
Which, not fully awake, drowsily rise from the earth
In the distance; like giants they rise and shake off their slumber,
With a dull droop of the head vanishing into mists
For a moment, but at a wink they spring back to twilight:
Polydore, young in his dreams, walks out of darkness to dawn.
Longing in minstrelsy sweet, and lingering over his journey,
He will hum a low note tuned to a shell in his hand;
Images swarm on his path to the heights and mock all his senses,
List! his voice too they touch, tipping his words with their wings:

"Lovely Aurora! I see thee arise from thy bed in the Orient,
With the stroke of thy hand moving the curtain aside;
White and slender thy fingers are laid on that curtain nocturnal,
Hanging down from the skies, faintly ingrained with light;
Through the break that hath cloven the night, I gain sweetest glimpses
Of a maiden that stirs, clad in the white robe of rest,
On a bed that is made of the snow-flake or down of the eider,
And is rocked to a hymn sung by the winds of the hills.
But now while I am peering with curious eye to behold thee,
Out with a bound thou art sprung, maiden of mildness and grace,
And in thy soft-flowing garment thou sweepest across the high Heavens,
Robed in the drapery fair of the Immortals of old.
Goddess thou art, I adore thee, I know thy shape and thy movement,
Now appearing to me, mortal yet dear to thy glance.
Pour in my wandering soul a nectarean drop of thy beauty,

As thou revealest thyself yonder amid the mad stars
Throwing their torches unnumbered into thy calm mellow lustre,
Till they, lost in thy train, seem to have shot from the sky.
Up the horizon thou movest a queen, in silence majestic,
No one heareth thy step ere thy sweet presence be felt;
Where thou passest is light, but not the fierce glare of Apollo,
Mild is thy lustre as love that is unknown to itself.''

Polydore stopped for a breath, how strong and swift were his heart-beats,
Forging the thought of his soul into the musical word!
Soon he felt lonely, he could not endure his own company voiceless,
For to another he sang, could he but sing to himself.
Deeply he sighed for what was behind, but he ever looked forward;
Strange how future and past mingled their strains in his song!
Was it Aurora he saw, or was it the thought of another

Who had slipped into her shape, as he addressed her on high?

"Oh how youthful thy glance as coyly thou climbest the Heavens!
Blushes start in thy cheek, roses are wound in thy hair,
Innocence moves in thy light, yet tinged with a red ray of passion;
Maiden divinely young, thine is the gift of the Gods.
When horrid Night has long blinded the Hours beneath her dark mantle,
On thy lover thou look'st, then all at once there is light;
Every morning for him thou hast the fresh face of the flowers,
Dipped in Castalian dew, breathing Elysian perfume;
And from thine eyes there flows through the world a shy subtle radiance:
'Tis the love in thy look, deepest and first of the heart.
Thine is that first love, breaking its way out the soul to the senses,
With the might of the God, who in the heart builds a shrine
All to himself, and thence he divinely doth pour out his splendors,

Newly begetting the man, newly creating the world.
First love knoweth the mortal but once, while thine is forever,
Born each morning anew for the dear spouse at thy side;
O, the hard law for us of the wretched race of Terrestrials,
Draughts repeated though sweet, lose of their flavor divine;
Once, only once can be felt the delicious surprise of the senses,
Once the rapture of soul, when we know not what we do."

In the swoon of his feeling pale Polydore sank into silence,
Back he looked on his path; has he left something behind?
Softly his glances were flushed with the rays of a fond recognition,
See, on the gloom of the night flashes the hope of the Dawn.
O Polydorus, art thou, mad imortal, now wooing a Goddess?
Hush, his voice has come back, as he looks into the East:
"Say, for whom is this love of the maid, the whole world overflowing,

Every new morn in a bliss kindled down under the sea?
For Tithonus, happy Tithonus, old man and a mortal;
Him caresses the maid daily abloom in her youth,
Where he lies on his couch far beyond the round rim of the ocean,
Till Aurora in fright upward unwillingly springs,
Roused by the rumble and roar far away, on the breath of the darkness
Borne to her bed of repose, startling ambrosial hours.
Hark! 'tis the whirl of the wheels, and the stamp of the steeds of Apollo,
In a chariot of flames bringing the bold-eyed day.
'Hasten, Aurora, announce with thy torch his coming to mortals,
Circle the globe with thy wings, night shall restore thee to love.
Here I await thy return o'er the sea in soft fleeces of slumber;
Rouse up the work of the world, heralding light and its task;
Round the whole earth thou must pass, my embrace must be earned by thy journey,
Parted we are for a day, won by thy duty is love.'

Up she leaps from the couch, and glances afar to the westward,
Into the darkness she peers, that lies outstretched on the globe
Like a dragon; then lifting the train of her robe of pure twilight,
Softly she treads on the hills, steps from a top to a top,
Till she hath filled the whole arch of the sky to the bending horizon
With her Olympian folds waving soft silence of light;
As if a statue might suddenly rise from a mountain of marble
Into the welkin above, there to be seen as a God.
Forth she is ready to fly, but turns in the pang of departure,
Gives a last look at her love, yet with a hope on her face;
Many complaints she sighs on the night wind about separation,
She embraces those limbs furrowed and trembling with age,
And she strokes with her delicate hand the white locks of Tithonus,
Kissing to smoothness his brow broken in ridges by time.
Is it true that Love can be kindled by snows of the winter?

Seeks it to slake its fierce thirst at the cool fountain of age?
Gentle tears fill her eyes during all of the hours of absence,
Weep a soft dew on the earth till every flower's deep heart,
Touched with a sisterly grief, is filled with a drop of pure sorrow;
Heaven's star-lit dome loses itself in her glance,
Constellations swoon out of their place at the touch of her finger,
And in her light-flowing veil sapphires she culls from the skies.
Yet, Aurora, yet never wert thou by the day overtaken,
Far in advance of each sun is thy fleet flight from embrace,
Time thou hast left in the race, thou outsteppest the steeds of Apollo,
Who from his car overhead smites us to age with his beams.
But, O lily-crowned victress, immortal thou art and a Goddess,
Youth sits throned in thy cheek, scattering blossoms eterne.
In the evening thou bathest thy waist in the springs of the Ocean,
Then every morn at this hour thou art arisen new-born."

Polydore ceased; he sat down on a stone, the first stone of a temple,
Smote with his staff in the soil, out of the ground peeped a face,
That had been hewn in the ages antique by the hand of a sculptor,
Formed to a love in his heart out of the Parian block.
Long it had lain in the earth, its body immortal with beauty,
Slept the long sleep of its night veiled from the look of the world,
Till now Polydore wandering happens along on his journey,
Strikes but a blow with his staff, gone is the magical spell,
Out of the grave uprises a Goddess to glad resurrection,
Still with the smile of her youth brought down from Hellas of old.
What, thou too on the earth! and takest thy shape in my presence!
Polydore rose in his joy, stood on the stone of the fane,
Lofty Aurora appeared to his vision transfigured to marble
Out of the twilight afar falling in refluent folds.
But when again he looked at the sky, the face of the morning

Told of a change, a decay, plaintively tuning
his words:

"Goddess! thy lover Tithonus is not only old,
but a mortal,
Older he grows each day, burnt is his flesh by
the suns
Till it is crisp to the touch, and soon must drop
down into ashes,
When by endowment divine there will be left
him his voice.
Once he too was a youth along the green banks
of Scamander,
Fairest of shepherds he grew, piping on Idæan
heights;
'Mid the daughters of swains he passed a sunny
existence,
With them leading the dance over the emerald
slopes,
Haunting meadows and streams sweet nymphs
ever wooed him,
All their love was in vain 'gainst the high rival
who came,
For it was thou. As thy light-stepping chorus
sped over the hill-tops
Once long ago in a laugh to the Dardanian
vale,
Thou beheldest him first, and thereafter ahead of
the morning,

Softly on tiptoe thou cam'st out of the East with a blush,
Thou didst slip up behind and peer over the high top of Ida,
Gaze on the shepherd asleep down in the valley below;
Rapt in a dream of thy love mid his dew-laden herd he was lying,
There thou didst join thy white arms round the fresh loins of the youth,
Daintily lift him and lap him in slumberous folds of thy twilight,
Bear him away round the world over Oceanus' streams.
Thither ye fled, ye lovers antique, and dwelt in your rapture,
Which, O Goddess, still gleams into the world from thy face,
But the years the mortal pursued and plowed up his forehead,
Wisdom's harvest they sowed, but with the tares of Old Age.
Pale grew the cheek of Tithonus, and the light curl on his temples,
Bitterly frosted all through, like a lone icicle hung.
Weak is Old Age, but he creeps on the frolicsome days of the youthful,
While in the garden they sport mid the red roses of life,

Fair Tithonus grew old, yet he had a young love in his bosom,
Which immortal will be when the frail body is dropped;
And he still has a voice outpouring the notes of new music,
Hymning a passionate strain to his Aurora the fair;
Song holds the essence immortal of love, wherein all its fervor
Out of the heart is expressed into the heart by the word.
'Tis his voice that she loves, to his voice her soul is still clinging,
Though the rose leaf hath dropped out of his cheek to the ground;
Voice immortal to youth immortal in them is wedded,
Like has found like in its love, Homer has married his Muse.
For the voice of Tithonus still sings with the warmth of a lover,
And sweet accents of song fall from his bodiless lips,
Like the low tender whispers of Zephyrus, wooer of evening,
Breaths that stray on the air, melting to musical sighs.
Age, while it calms with its wisdom, has filled up the deeps of the passion,

Shallow the vessel that seethes wild at one touch of the flame.
Still a young shepherd he is, and sings a fresh song to the maiden,
Voice untouched by decay changes old years into new.
Poet Tithonus, old man and a mortal," cried Polydorus,
"Youth, a Goddess, each night breathes golden dreams on thine eyes,
And each morn to her task she springs from thy couch with caresses,
Weaving the kiss of her lips into the word of thy soul.
Thou dost speak at the touch of thy passion, that speech sings forever,
Sings in the soul of the maid which she rays out of her looks,
As she now meets me and passes in haste to return to her lover,
There to drink the full song which I hear lisped in her train.
Old man, thine is the gift of the Gods, their best gift to mortals,
Word that never grows old, treasured in maidenly heart,
Voice that ever is fresh in the dews of a morning eternal,

Thine is the gift of the Gods — share me thy heavenly gift,
Share me the love of Aurora, the beautiful, youthful forever,
Thou art a mortal, art dead — pity me here still alive,
Me a mortal like thee, still chasing the hope and the passion,
Share me thy gift of the Gods,— share me the youth of the world
Which though linked to thy body of death, is wooed by us living,
Share me the beautiful one" — Polydore looked, she was gone;
Garish Day had driven her off with a bold stare of sunlight,
As on the summits above Phœbus was mounting his car,
She had fled out of sight, the lone minstrel was left in the valley,
With a dream in his heart nourishing passionate strains;
Still the fair vision was humming all day in his thoughts as he wandered,
Tuning to music their dance as they would leap into words,
Like the youths of the chorus who print a melodious movement

Clear on Parnassian air, winding about on the slopes.
But she had fled from him, hastening forth to the couch of Tithonus,
Ghostly old man of the East, long ago bodily dead,
But who is wedded to youthful Aurora, the fair, the immortal:
Polydore, hope for the maid, she will to-morrow return,
Thou must catch her spirit's still shadow the moment it passes,
Fix it forever in lines drawn round her fugitive form;
Look again at her statue that once stood up in this temple,
Mark how swift is her flight, though in eternal repose.
Fleet Aurora will yield up her speed to the hand of a mortal,
But an Olympian net over her shape he must cast,
As the form of fair Aphrodite was caught by the Artist,
Holding her helplessly fast in his invisible toils;
For not even a Goddess can break out the net of her bondage,

If she once has been seized, prisoned in beautiful lines.
Haste, Polydorus, speed thy way to the lands of Aurora,
Over the rim of the sea into the home of the Past,
Go, now bring her thy living love, as once did Tithonus,
Go, take captive her form, then she forever is thine.

PART FIRST.

Ecce Roma.

Book First.

In Urbem.

I. Ultimus Romanorum.

What can it be in that face which couples so
Great and so Little —
Often I ask of myself moving amid Roman
crowds.
Many a look that flits through the streets has the
shadowy semblance
Of a something divine which was alive long
ago.
Many a form is an echo like that of a dim distant
trumpet
Heralding glories past sunk in the flesh of to-
day.

List the lament on the air from a swift spectral face that I followed
Through the noise of the crowd, out of the market to church,
Over the Tiber and up to the Pincio, eluding me always
Till the Pantheon's spell both of us held face to face:
"Seek me no further, stop! on this spot I yield up my secret
Which for centuries long I have been bearing in pain;
Here is the fane where anciently mingled the Gods and the Heroes,
Built in the form of the world holding within it the world.
See! it surrounds thy gaze like the high everlasting horizon,
Arches itself to a dome bearing thee up to the skies.
Everywhere it is telling of greatness — of Great Men who dwelt here,
And are dwelling here still — hark to the voice on these walls.
Deem it not fancy — oft now in Rome thou wilt see an old Hero,
Or it may be a God, clad in the shapes of the low;
He has returned once more to the Earth to serve out his penance,

For the sin of his deed which he had wrought here before;
Still he could not avoid the burden and pang of the action;
Destiny forced him to do, driving him forward to pain.
Ah, the price of the Great Deed is guilt, and guilty the Hero
Pays the price of his act in the fierce torment of flesh."
Suddenly over his face rolled a wave from the ocean of sadness
Which he bore in his breast; all of his frame was a storm
Only a moment; strong like a Roman, he put down his heart-throbs,
When again he began sternly his soul to confess:
"Out with the word — to be great in this world doth mean to be guilty,
Suffering follows from guilt, as the red lightning of law.
Mark him — the Great Man never is happy, never offenseless,
His endowment is Will dripping with innocent blood,
Will is always the smiter, assailing some right of existence,
Justice then comes with her doom, weaponed with penalty dire.

Hercules, paradised now in thy legends, Olympian Hero,
Stalwart thine arm was indeed, burdens to heap on thy back;
What did it boot thee in toil to have cleared the wild earth of its monsters?
Each great action of thine was a whole worldful of pain.
O Bellerophon! thou for thy country and race wert the slayer
Of the death-breathing fiend that from the Orient sprang;
Speak the reward of thy action? Madness — within thy torn bosom
Nemesis turned loose the fiends which in the fight thou hadst slain.
And the mightiest one of you all, O Julius Cæsar,
Who didst snatch the old world out of its funeral pyre,
Where it was burning to ashes, and bowl it down into the present,
Who with thy conquest didst build far in the North the great dyke,
Bulwark of might and of light set against the barbarous deluge —
What was thy meed but thy death followed by taunts of all Time?
Once I saw thee standing just here, the soul of this temple,

And the world seemed too small holding the arch of thy brow,
Daily the Sun would peep through the eye of this lofty Panthéon
Thee once more to behold, greatest of all he had seen."
Slowly the spirit looked up to the radiant dome of the temple,
Whence the light seemed to fall down from the eye of the God;
Placing himself in the sheen, he was lit through and through with the sunfire,
Out of the flames he yet spoke, dropping his head with a sigh:
"Still the Hero after his deed must lapse into lowness,
Thousands of years he endures ere he is cleansed of his wrong,
Suffering is his red badge, alas! the great action is guilty,
He probation must pass smitten for ages with pangs,
Till his spirit is purged of its guilt and Nemesis sated,
Then a Hero again he may appear on the earth."
"Who art thou, specter," I cried, "how speeding through time to this moment!
How escaping that law which even Rome could not break!"

But he pointed his set ghostly finger to pedestals empty
Where the Great Men of Rome anciently stood with the Gods:
"Ah, to be great! it is to be guilty — it is to be wretched,
Though the Hero be borne to the Olympus of Fame."
More he seemed willing to speak when fell a moment of silence,
Lips he moved in the sheen, but not a sound could be heard;
Like a glimmer he flashed up into the sky of the temple,
Lost in the pour of the beams falling down out of the sun,
With the God he rose on the sheen to the top of Pantheon,
Still I peered in the light, but he had vanished beyond.
Insuppressible sorrow steals o'er me, it crushes me downward,
All the Fates of hoar Time break in at once to my heart,
Pain strikes every sense of the body, poignant with pity
For the Heroes of old, guilty in deeds that were great.
This is the price of thy action, O Roman — penalty lasting

Laid by the world upon *thee* doing the work of the world;
Still thou didst not shrink from thy task, from the guilt of thy grandeur,
Sad as sorrow itself, sadder it is than the grave.
Tears flow down the hard stones at the tragedy born of existence,
Ever the man has to do that which undoes him at last.
Even to live is a deed which has in the end to be paid for,
Birth is but an old debt which must be canceled by death.
Slowly I droop on a column, I am but a drop of pure pity,
In this presence is man only the fall of a tear;
For a moment I swoon, then faintly I rise from my heart-ache,
Out the Pantheon I grope into the sunshine of Rome.
Mount, O Phœbus, thy car, and fling thy light from the Heavens,
Still to-day there is joy if but to Nature we turn;
Still to-day there is life, see it here festooning these ruins,
Green is even decay; up, let us pluck the new flower.

2. Roma Carissima.

"Tell me why do you daily run off to ancient museums,
Or to some temple, of which merely a column now stands?
Yesterday why did you gaze so long at the pillar of Trajan?
Just as two men might converse both of you stood face to face.
All my life I have seen it without ever hearing its language;
There I brushed you and passed, but you would never take note.
What do you see in all these marble relics and ruins?
Is a Goddess of stone sweeter than woman with life?
Let me go with you to-day and look with your look at the statues,
As they rise in long rows held upon pedestals high;
I would see what you see and know what you know in this city,
Surely some secret there is which you have kept from my heart."—
So spake the maiden of Rome just when in the morning I started
To the task of the day, searching for treasures antique,

Which have still to be dug from the ages by every new-comer:
'Twas not the first time she showed jealousy of the old Gods.
What could I answer but "Come, you shall enter the magical circle
That you may see what I see, that I may hear what you say!"
Rapidly then we went down the street and over the Tiber,
Past the high palaces' pomp, through the hoar ruins of Rome;
All the city rose up from the earth and became but one temple,
That was the temple of Time which he had built for himself.
Soon we came to a forest of columns that led to an entrance,
Where we entered great walls filled with an old sculptured world.
Zeus we saw, the ruler of Gods, but the father of mortals,
Parent ever below, sovereign ever above;
Well might we blench at the thunder-bolt's glare that leaped from his forehead,
Still underneath we felt love softening lines in his lips.
Juno was there, and proved in her look she was queen of the Heavens,

For no mortal man ever to love her would dare;
King Apollo was striding in stone to the slaughter of darkness,
Swift as the gleam of the Sun, fixed though he stood on his feet;
Venus was also present in many a posture alluring,
As the Goddess of Love she had a room to herself;
Vast was the throng of the deities coming from Earth and Olympus,
Ocean, River and Nymph, down to the goat-footed Faun,
Everlasting assembly of Gods transfigured to marble,
As they gathered once, called by the voice of the bard,
When they all were summoned up to the Olympian palace,
There to take sides in the war over the city of Troy.
Many high mortals also belonged to the sacred assembly,
Who have done here below nobly the deeds of the Gods,
Or who have suffered for others with a divinity's patience,
Who have resisted fierce Fate though they have sunk in the fight.

See! great Hercules yonder reclines — he is legless and headless,
Still in his trunk you behold human becoming divine;
Ariadne forsaken has fallen asleep in her sorrow,
But her dream has restored sweetly the lover she lost;
Pericles grandly is here, still speaking for war in his helmet,
Man of the people he is, for he is man of the Gods;
And beside him through all the centuries lingers Aspasia,
They still together remain, still they shall love in these halls.
Zeus Laocoon with his fair children is linked in the serpent,
Which has caught him like Fate with all his beautiful world,
And great throes of despair that burst from the pain of the marble
Herald the doom of the time, tragic are also the Gods;
Scarce can I keep back the sigh at the death of the beautiful ages,
Petrified life of the world, still it is living in stone.
Silent passes the maiden through long white lines of fair idols,

Looking with joy on the shapes, yet too afraid of her joy;
Wearied with vision at last, she began to speak of the Gods there,
Standing in presence of Zeus who from his bust gave the nod:
"Oft I have heard they once were alive in a world of their glory;
In old times they could talk, when they were worshiped as Gods.
Here in Rome they had altars and shrines, were entreated in prayer,
Though they be now of rock; heathen was then all the land.
Blessings they sent by day and by night, in peace and in warfare;
Then they ruled the whole world, they were the Kings of the Kings.
But there came a great war — the Gods fought — and in it were beaten;
When they were thrown out the sky, fell they a stone to the earth."
Then she touched the cold marble just with the tip of her finger,
But withdrew it at once when she had felt the dead chill.
"Oh these people of stone, how cold in falling from Heaven!
And how broken too, in the great depth of their fall!

Still they are found in our soil, when we plow up
the sites of old cities,
And, when we dig anywhere, they will turn
out of the earth;
Often they rise without heads, though the body
remains undecaying,
Think, they once were alive, walked in the
streets of the town,
With a man they would speak on the highway,
or in the forest,
And they would help him perchance, if he but
knew how to pray."
There she stopped for a moment as if to gather
her power
Boldly to utter the word which had come up
in her heart:
"Nay, these Gods and Goddesses loved, they
loved men and women,
Who, though mortal, were fair, fair to the
vision above;
Hot beat the hearts of the Gods in the joy of the
love that was human,
Had they been less of the man, they had not
been the whole God.
Theirs was the passion divine whose law is
sweetly fulfillment,
Then were divinity's sons born of the mothers
of earth.
So Rhea Silvia once gave birth to Romulus,
Remus,

Their high father was Mars, she was the mother of Rome.
Still to-day we fondly go back to her story aforetime,
Greatest of mothers she is, bearing the mightiest child.
Oh the old ages when Gods were sporting in river and fountain!
They would enter the home, give to good people their gifts;
Now they have to be dug from the ground, from the field of their warfare,
Gathered into this hall, whence they can never escape,
For they are prisoners banned into stone by the Pope in his castle,
He will not pardon their sins, he cannot take off the curse."
Almost in spite of herself she colored her words with her pity,
Dark in her soul underneath flowed a lone rill from the Gods.
But I could not help sighing aloud to her sigh:
"They are free no longer!
In a prison they stand simply set up to be seen.
Once when they wooed in the world, they lived with the might of a passion,
Now they as captives are held, suffered no longer to love."

Then she looked in my eye as if she suspected my matter,
All at once a new rill bubbled up out of the depths,
As her words in a mask took up the tone of inquiry:
"Have you never yet heard they have their worshipers still,
Who are scattered all over the earth, in country and city?
Nobody knows who they are, or at what place they may live;
They are said to be born with a mark on their heart of this God-world,
Which is unknown to their friends, even unknown to themselves,
Till they read in a blood-sealed book which secretly tells them,
Then to this worship they wake, though they know not what it is.
Soon they start on a journey, they can hardly tell whither,
But the road leads to Rome, still the old haunt of the Gods,
Whose true followers secretly come on a festival ancient
Though it be hid in the day sacred perchance to a Saint.
Thus they flock from every part of the globe, from each nation —

From wild Tartary's East, from new America's West,
All who, born out of time, are seeking their ancient heirship,
For they feel they can find here the old deities yet,
Who though once hurled down to be stones, with bodies all battered,
Still can arouse the same spell as in the past when they breathed,
For they possess the God's power to work upon men in the distance,
And they would lose this gift, if they were taken from Rome."
Slyly that artful maiden peeped into my face as she said this,
Trying to catch my thought as it took wing on a glance;
"Is it so?" I asked then; she answered, "Yes, I believe it;
That is the power they have, drawing their own from afar."
Doubtful she stood for a moment, testing her thoughts in a balance,
Not quite sure of herself; soon she was braced to her words,
And she continued: "Now the clock strikes to ask you a question:
Are you not one of these men, followers of the old Gods?

I confess to you, long I have it suspected in secret,
You have come over the sea, thousands of miles, to this spot;
You are always haunting the sites of ruinous temples:
Where these idols are, thither you hurry and stay.
I have noticed you scarcely ever will go to the churches,
And when you go, you hear never a word of the priest,
Never will make the sign of the cross or bow to an image,
But you look for old stones which in the wall may be built;
Scarcely you glance, as you pass, at the picture of Saint or Madonna,
Yet if some statue be found thither you run in a joy.
Not one word concerning the Pope, no desire to see him
Has been uttered by you, though I besought you one day;
And when I asked you to go and witness the grand crucifixion,
You were silent as death, as if I crucified *you*.
Once the priest came and sprinkled our dwelling with sanctified water,

I saw you laugh to yourself when you thought
I did not see;
When I asked you that day if ever you went to
confession,
You ran out of the house, leaving me all to
myself.
If I but tell of the miracle wrought by some
hallowed relics,
Though you repress for my sake, you cannot
hide what you are.
Often you waft me away with the hand or shrug
up your shoulders;
You belong not to us, all of your mind is
afar
Back in the old days of Rome, although you were
born in the present —"
Just at this moment she turned suddenly off
with her glance,
On the spot she was changed as her eyes caressed
a small statue:
"See! this boy is my choice if I dare choose
of these stones;
Winged he moves while dreamful he looks, yet
laughs at his mischief;
He cannot find what he is, I have been just in
his place.
Hear me! At moments I seem to be born back
into that old life;
When these idols I see, I have to love them
myself."

Closer she drew to my side and changed her tone
to a whisper,
For she feared her own voice when it burst out
of her heart,
Lest it might utter the sin for which the whole
world was once punished;
Still she could not unsay what all her being had
said;
There at once I felt the kiss of her soul — she
had found me,
Just as I had found *her*, when with my heart-
beats I cried:
"Call me by whatever name — be it heathen —
I know not my title,
Yet I know a delight which I have not felt
before;
I cannot tell what it is, it came to me first with-
out knowledge,
Even far back in my years, longing I felt for a
world
Which had passed on its course and taken my
heritage lovely;
Groping amid the dim Past, stumbling around
the wide globe,
Over the ruins of Rome I fell in the midst of my
journey,
When I looked up I beheld just the fair world
that I sought."
"Tell then," she begged me, "what is the
festival you are now keeping?

For a festal look you have been showing all day."
" This," I replied, " is the holiday sweet of the Muses and Amor,
Come now, let us go home, out of this marble to life."

3. The Roman Holiday.

Stones with voices, columns with music, temples with language,
Open your lips once more, speak me your spirit's still word!
Threading your ancient piles, I always come back to the modern,
Hunting for aught far away, I have discovered myself.
Give me the key-note of your great orchestra hewn out of marble
That the thought and the word I may attune to your strain.
What is that voice from the ruins! its music sings out of the distance!
What is that form I behold! lovely its look turns to me.
Is it the sound or the sight? O Rome, art thou song or a statue?
I cannot tell what thou art, I do not know what I am.

Let me be danced on thy billows of joy till I sink
in thy ocean!
Listen! already the strain! See them! the
Goddesses come!

All the Muses are dancing a measure around
Hippocrene,
Whose clear waters return ever their shapes to
the eye;
All the fair forms are divinely set free from the
prison of garments,
With a light veil round the loins, gently they
sway to the wind;
All the Nine Sisters of song are sharing one soul
in their beauty,
There is now not a Muse absent or slighting
her joy.
Often with hands joined together they swiftly
encircle the fountain,
Round it a garland they weave, which of their
bodies is made;
Often by threes they glide through curves of
mellifluous movement,
In a succession of wreaths crowning the pearl-
dropping spring;
Often they singly are leaping with graceful
intoxication,
Carving by gesture reliefs on the clear frieze
of the air.

Always their bodies are singing in happy harmonious chorus,
Singing by motion they are like the sweet stars of the sky.
Always they turn to the fount that holds up before them its mirror,
In it they look at their forms, looking they show too the soul.
Always they dwell in a temple of golden Olympian sunshine;
Say can the shade of a cloud ever pass over this world?

Suddenly, madly into the group of innocent Muses
Down lights Amor the Winged. Shivered to drops is the rill,
Hippocrene grows turbid and restless, stirred by some passion,
While the dancers have ceased dancing their wreaths on the brink.
How each Muse endeavors to take the boy to her bosom!
Kisses his forehead and lips in a wild frenzy of love!
Amor, thou rogue of a Godling, all Nine at once are thy trophy,
Each too being a Muse dowered with beauty divine;

Was not one quite enough for thy triumph, insatiable gallant?
Must thou have all in thy might, meekly obeying thy nod?
Darest thou here, in the ancient walls of the conqueress mighty,
Make thy conquest too, swaying the body at will?
Darest thou here, in the sacred shades of hundreds of churches,
Build thy heathen shrine, guiding the soul by thy torch?
Yes, so it is — each Muse has become the servant of Amor,
Every note of her voice can but re-echo his name,
Which has been sung by the marbles of Rome for ages on ages
In her temples and halls, e'en it is heard from her tombs.
Amor, smallest of Gods, is the tyrant of sunny Parnassus,
Where he is perched on the peak, shooting his darts round the world.
But behold! now he comes, the lord of mighty Quirinus,
On whose seven hills high he triumphantly sits;
Still the deceiver, he hides his dart in the folds of the Muses;

Whoever seeks their embrace, by his sly arrow is stung.
O ye shrines and temples and statues, I feel your true worship,
Now I have found out your heart, felt too its beat in my breast;
And ye musical fountains throbbing up over the city,
Now I know whence ye come, what too ye say in your joy:
All the world thou art, O Rome, and yet without Amor,
All the world is no world, Rome too alone is not Rome.

4 Found.

O, but the pleasure — and yet it is something far more than a pleasure
Which I am having at Rome, strolling in paths of the past.
What is the cause of this lofty attunement of all of the senses,
Waking a music within unto the music without?
And there is irresistible pressure of song in each heart-throb,
Seeking to measure itself out of the old to the new.

Give me the beat of thy numbers, O City, sing me the key-note
Which may be heard underneath all thy great Present and Past.
As to-day I sauntered along by the banks of the Tiber,
An old lute-string I found dropped in the rubbish of time;
Out of the refuse I plucked the musical chord of the Ancients,
Soon I had cleansed it of filth by a quick bath in the stream;
Home I hastened with joy, in triumph bearing the treasure,
Fastened the string to a shell that in my room hung unused,
Lightly I touched the new-strung chord with the tip of my finger,
Hearkened the while for the note which it might throb to the air,
For, O Propertius, I thought it might whisper the name of thy beauty,
Or invoke a fair shape loved by a lyrist of old;
But another it lisped in words that were shockingly modern,
Yet with a rhythmical stride tuned to the step of a Greek;
Only the name of a maiden it hums now — the stubborn old lute-string;

But her dear body it wraps in a soft echo of folds,
So that she moves in the drapery ta'en from the Goddesses' wardrobe,
When they once dwelt on the earth, roaming with men in the fields.

5. The Open Secret

O ye talking marbles, galleries, palaces, ruins,
What is the tale that I hear told by your voices of stone?
Now before you I stand and joyously live in your presence,
Question you much about Fate which overtook you of old.
Speak from the heart of your hearts to the stranger your powerful secret,
Which has drawn him to Rome wholly unknown to himself.
All day long in your company strolling I eagerly hearken
What to each other you say, what you are saying to me.
And ye beautiful idols, let me interrogate briefly:
Once driven out of the world, why now return ye to me?
Say, does Amor always fly hither in search of his Psyche?

Do they, coming in stealth, find one another in Rome?
Look, a dark eye of the South has been kindled, I feel its fierce ardor
Firing the air in its path with an invisible flame;
Coal I supposed to be black, but this jet of thine eye is far blacker;
Inside I know is a mine, see, too, the mine is on fire.
Filled with wonder and warmth, I gaze at the spray of its sparkles,
Down it drops at my glance, shutting me out with its lid.
What is this mystery seen in the eyes — the darker the brighter?
And the severer the burn, so much the more is the joy?
Nought can I see now, under an arbor of long slender lashes
Gracefully curving around, lie in concealment the orbs,
While above there glistens a frieze of the whitest Carrera
Resting on two arches dark where is the portal of sight.
Cursed is ever the luck of the lover, my torch is extinguished
Just the moment it lit, held in the blaze of thine eye.

Now like a gleed that is dropped in its glow on the surface of water,
It not only is quenched, but it is fuming in rage.
Tender and fine is this flamelet of love, and peculiar in nature;
It must be kindled anew with every breath of the soul,
Else it goes out with a puff that leaves us in dreariest darkness,
Wherein demons run wild, feasting on hearts of despair.
Seldom the flame will burn of itself, of its own precious matter;
Eye must look deep into eye, both are then kindled at once.
What shall I do? My look turns away to relieve disappointment,
Seeks new objects of sight, rests on the form of a boy
Who appears to shoot from a gleam and to glide into figure,
On light pinions afloat — who can it be, do you think?
Fresh-fledged Amor it is, eternally flying in marble,
Now more than ever he speeds, bent on the weightiest task.
In the unsteady soft light of the Moon, the lamp lit for lovers,

That with a sheet of white mist covers the court where we sit,
Pallid marble has won a new life, and is gifted with motion:
Amor now starts from his base, reaching aside for his bow,
Carefully too he chooses a fine-pointed, well-feathered arrow
From a full quiver of bolts slung at his side from a belt.
Placed on the notch is the string, to the barb drawn back is the missile,
Steady he taketh his aim, fixed on I know not what mark.
Brave little Amor was floating in mild undulations of moonshine,
Chirp sang the bow-string released — where has fallen the shaft?
Startled from dreams by the twang of the bow and the whiz of the arrow,
To the maiden I turned speedily casting a glance,
Spying out whether she too had seen the wild doings of Amor —
Mad, mysterious boy, recklessly shooting his darts
In the dim moonshine which charms the eye to a lull sympathetic,
Till dull flesh turns to sleep, while the light soul is a dream.

Gods! each ray of her eye has become a fleet fiery arrow,
Through my poor bosom have passed quiver and bolts and the bow.
Now I can tell you where that shaft of mad Amor has fallen,
Why he moved from his base wrapped in the robes of the Moon.
Colonnades Roman, by night and by day, what lessons ye teach me,
As I wander in joy through all your forests of stone!
Now I know what you mean, ye parks, museums and gardens,
What ye galleries say, peopled with sculpture antique;
All of you hold in your hearts the beautiful secret of Nature,
Which you whisper to me haunting your presence just now:
"We are the servants of Amor, through us he discovers his Psyche,
Each of them comes to our Rome out of the ends of the earth,
Both of them longing, yet wholly unable to tell what they long for,
Till they enter our home, still the old home of the Gods.
When the two lovers behold us, then they have found one another,

E'en in the church they embrace, taking it all to themselves."

6. August Roma and Roman Augusta.

Speak to me, Rome, what art thou — heathen, barbarian, or christian?
Or perchance all three blended together in one?
Three great Romes I can see, the old and the new and the middle;
Tell me where I belong, I do not know it myself.
When I look at these ruins and temples, I am an old Roman,
But when the maiden appears, down to the present I drop
Suddenly through two thousand years without ever stopping,
Then I take breath from the fall, I am again on my feet.
Two are my fair ones, august Roma and Roman Augusta,
They together belong both in the name and the deed.
One has beauty of greatness, the other has greatness of beauty,
Each is the image of each, mother and daughter I love.
But the time is too precious just now to praise the high mother,

Here is the daughter alone springing down into my boat,
For an afternoon ride on the back of old Father Tiber;
Gaily she seizes the oars, over the current we speed,
Merrily dancing along on the up and the down of the wavelets,
To some invisible heart swelling and sinking in tune.
Stay, O Sun, in thy course, restrain the mad flight of the Hours,
Look from thy chariot on high, ponder the glories of Rome;
Nothing so great has ever rose under thine eye on this planet,
Thou, I know, hast seen all, measuring bloom and decay;
Stop thy steeds for to-day, let them rest on the slopes of the mountains
Ere thou fling thyself down under the waves of the sea;
Pour thy fiery glances over the grand Colosseum,
Burnish anew the old fanes with thy warm shimmer of gold,
Climb the dome of St. Peter's as if thou wert mounting the heavens,
Peep with thy passionate gleam into the windows and halls.

Cast all thy glow on the yellowish curls of old Father Tiber,
Stoop down into his bed, swim with him here at our side,
Enter the boat, and look along with me on her who is lovely,
Hark, the sweep of her arm sings a refrain to the boat;
As it rises and falls to the rythmical flow of the water,
Beautiful verses she makes out of thy sunshine to-day.
Verses — them I shall copy — Where is my note-book? List to the time-beat —
One with the heart of the world, one with the old and the new.—
"Give me your glances and spare me your numbers," the maiden responded,
"Tethered your tongue cannot move to the grand gait of the South."
"Nay but I must," I replied, and started at once with my task there,
Making all of great Rome dance up and down to the beat;
"See my refractory English keeping its stroke to thy oar-blades,
And with thy body I count measures that flow like the folds,
Running into hexameters, into pentameters also,

With the to and the fro rolled from the sway
of thy shape.
Thus my lines I set down, borne along by the
joy of the current;
Who can resist the sweet spell, waked in the
heart by the Muse?
But I confess at times I am lost in the trance of
thy movement;
And I miss the right stroke in the delight of
my mood;
Blame me not if once in a while I fall out of
measure,
With a fresh look at thy form I shall come
back to myself.
In this presence old Homer would madly break
loose from his numbers,
For a caress now and then, freed from the
bondage of speech."
Then I pick up my dangling line, just where I had
dropped it,
Mend it anew with a word — none can say
where was the break.
Thus we dally down stream till we pass by Monte
Testaccio,
Dreaming the dream of the world, as it here
happened in Time.
Through the centuries past we are floating down
into the present,
Into the future we glide, castles we see in its
dawn.

Suddenly springs up the maiden, dropping the oars in her terror;
"How shall we ever get back over the dash of the waves?
I must turn round and work for dear life against the wild current;
Harder it is to stem, when you have gone with the stream."
"Be not anxious, O Dearest, fling to the Fates what must be,
Is not to-day a reward for all the spite that can come?
Leave thyself to the Gods, and follow wise Tiber's example,
He forever flows down, down to the infinite sea,
But he somehow always returns to the tops of the mountains,
Whence again he descends into the valley and plain.
Two are the streams of the wonderful river, the upper and lower,
Mounting in clouds to his source, falling in rills to the sea,
Down hill to-day on the earth, to-morrow up hill through the heavens —
Give me an oar! there it strikes! now I shall help thee turn round."

7. On the Pincio.

Grand is the sight and sovereign — look and become immortal!
All of the city is set golden in rays of the sun;
Dearest, stand here and sweep over Rome from this height on the Pincio!
What has ruled in our world thou wilt now see in a glance.
Here to the left is the Capitol, there to the front is St. Peter's —
Two great masters of Time seated on two Roman hills.
Sung by the musical stones from the tops of the loftiest steeples,
Chanted by grim grizzled walls which the dark cloister engird,
Whispered even by urns whose ashes long since have been scattered,
What is that voice over all? Hear it again in these lines.
One great word I can catch from the heart of the city eternal,
That is the word which unites two loving hearts into one.
Come, let us turn to these trees for relief, we are gilding the daylight,
Dreaming the hours away drowned in a worldful of joy.

Let us seek some repose from the pitiless arrows of Amor,
Under this deep-leaved oak watching himself in the pool.
How serenely he gazes in mild contemplation forever
Viewing his sinuous limbs knotted in might for the blasts!
Stooping forward a little for firmness he stands like an athlete
Ready to strike or be struck; covered with moss are old wounds.
Here on his roots let us rest like the idle poetical shepherd,
While we look at yon swan sporting his down on the pond.
Beautiful oarsman in white, he propels unerring his pinnace,
In each movement is grace, in all exertion is ease.
Placid is sleeping the water, showing pellucid the bottom,
Only the yawl of the bird laughingly wrinkles its face.
See the oars of his feet, how they work in motion transparent!
Under the water the down sendeth the gleam of the dawn.
Proudly rises the neck of the swimmer upheld by the Graces,

Sweeter than honey of bees is the distillment of form.
With one thrust through the crystalline surface down to the bottom
Deftly its ebony bill spoons up the glittering sand.
Gracefully curves that long supple neck with its feathery flexure,
As in a crystal preserved, though it is moving the while.
Bird, a sculpture thou art, disrobed of Pentelican marble,
Clear as the light is thy life, beautiful, too, as this day;
Or a God perchance, into thine his body transmuting,
Bringing thy fragrance of form from his Olympian home.
Leda once sat on this bank and gazed at thy neck till she loved thee;
Softly thou swim'st to the brink, holding her eye in thy power;
Up the bank thou hast crept, how white are the arms that surround thee!
Like the marble the breast where thou art clasped in embrace;
Loosened now is the zone, revealing the shape of the Graces,
In that old innocent world free of our guilt and our shame;

Under the strokes of her palm rears the neck of the silvery swimmer,
Quivering fiercely with joy in the soft wake of her hand;
Look! the swan is changing! the plumage turns to a lover
Who appears a white form like in his glance to a God!
Do I yonder behold the summit of snowy Olympus?
Is it Zeus that I see, father of Gods and of men? —
Dearest, again he is here, — that untamable rogue of an Amor,
He has transformed himself into the swan on the pool;
With his white plumes he feathers his arrow so subtle, unerring,
Now the whole bird is cloud streaming forth showers of darts;
Vain is the flight from a God who commands like a tyrant all Nature,
Changing it at his caprice into sly weapons of war.
Running away from Love's bolt, I run right into his battle,
Fleeing the face of a God is but to leap to his arms.

What a world thou art, O Rome! and yet I would
have thee none other,
Wert thou not what thou art I could not be
what I am.

8. In a Roman Wineshop.

Mountains are laughing for glee, and the willows
are weeping for gladness,
Even the winds give a sigh from the excess of
their joy,
Trees come out in their passionate green, and
are kissed by the summer
While the amorous vine fondly is hugging the
elm,
In each other's embrace both shoot into leaflets
and fruitage;
High the herds on the hills rollick together in
pairs.
Nature has put on to-day her new dress with a
thousand of jewels,
One huge diamond the sea sprinkles the air full
of stars,
Emeralds cover the slopes, amethystine the bend
of the heavens,
While the clouds are just now purest of pearls
set in gold,
Which the first goldsmith, the sun, has blazoned
with all of his cunning

For the necklaces fair worn by Olympian queens.
Yonder the Tiber is pouring in fun the flood of his amber,
But a ruby I hold, gem of all gems, in my hand,
Laughing me straight in the eye with hundreds and hundreds of sparkles,
Ogling, coquetting in gleams, filling the room full of smiles —
'Tis this wine. "Say, what is thy name, dear youth?" "Alessandro."
"Hast thou been long in Rome?" — "In the next house I was born." —
"And thou servest this wine of the Gods for the banquet of strangers?
And the grace of thy form here thou dost pour with the draught?
Ganymede be thou to me, with thee I shall mount to Olympus;
Speed thee, another full bowl rounded with rubious beads."
See! Alexander the Great has become Alessandro the Greater
Who is a conqueror too, helping me conquer the world.
O ye Great Men of Rome, ye children of glory eternal,
What is your triumph to mine, here as I sit in your place?

Thou, O Cæsar, mayst push out thine arms to the ends of the empire,
Over the Euphrates leap, mount to springs of the Nile,
Reach over Britain afar, and take in thy hand the whole Earth-ball —
Still too small are its bounds for all thy might and thy mind.
Put under law all the nations, mark out the path of the ages,
Stride from the east to the west, sweeping aloft with the sun,
High overarch with thy deed the past, the present, the future —
I to the wineshop shall go, lord of the universe too.

9. The Roman Cupbearer.

Alessandro, the wine that is poured with thy hand has a flavor
That not elsewhere in Rome has been revealed to my lips.
Now thou art humbly a cupbearer here in this old dingy tavern
Who once nectar didst serve in the bright palace of Jove.
The aroma of banquets ambrosial breathes from thy manner

As thou biddest the guest here to recline for his cup;
And thy movement already imparts to me inebriation
Ere the wine has been raised to my unhallowed lips. —
Mark but the path of his body as lightly he treads through the winehall
For the Graces you see drawing each line of his gait;
Would that his walk to yon door this instant were frozen to marble!
So might I always behold how young Apollo doth move.
Cannot those outlines of air through which he has passed, be transmuted
By some magical breath into Carrera the white?
Long ago lived a race which had faith in beauty immortal,
Faith created a hand gifted with cunning divine,
And that hand could turn into stone at the touch of a finger
Mild repose of the God, or his swift movement in wrath.
But that race has departed, and now for the deed of the Hero
Is but the mould of the air into which first it was cast,

So that the godlike action is seen in the world no longer
Fixed for the eye in the form which it received at its birth. —
Here thou comest with Bacchus — fill to the brim, Alessandro;
O, thou art pouring thy grace with the clear stream of the wine.
Thou, I now know, wert Ganymede, cupbearer of the Immortals,
And immortal thyself, shining serenely as they.
For the old Gods of Greece are here passing their ages of penance,
Here at Rome, for their sins; one sees them oft in the streets,
Oft in churches, in penitent prayer for some restoration,
Darkly feeling their fall from a divinely high world.
But Alessandro, thy food still droppeth from tables celestial,
Graces thy body annoint, though they refuse their long folds.
Happy symposiums held long ago in the halls of Olympus
Look from thine eye of delight, show in the wave of thy hand.
On the air the soft undulation of movement is sculptured

As thou disdainest the floor with thy invisible wings;
Worthy in beauty to deck the high frieze of some ancient temple
Would be the lines of thy limbs raised from the Parian block.
Youth too bathes thy muscles so light in its tireless essence,
Thou dost spring with the morn till the mid watches of night;
Still thy limbs are not weary, thy gait is filled with its motion,
Not a line shrinks away though all thy minutes are leaps;
Nor have I ever beheld thy features grow dark with vexation,
But thy humor serene laughingly sparkles at Fate.
Intoxication thou art, Alessandro — I feel its mild madness
Fragrantly rise to my brain, subtly commingled with wine.
Thee I bespeak when my journey has led to the winehall of Hades;
Cupbearer mine thou shalt be when I shall quaff with the shades.

10. The Goddess of the Capitol.

Joyfully all the day long I visit the galleries Roman,
Sink in their spirit and spell till to my time I am lost;
How the glad Hours pour up to the brim the wine of enjoyment,
Till the cup, overfull, spills its choice drops on the ground!
Quite too much have I seen and enjoyed of this banquet immortal,
Senses are dulled with delight, I cannot look any more.
So I say to myself: I now shall go home for my sunshine,
After a kindly rest, I shall take hold of my pen,
And a poem shall write that runs to the beat of old measures,
Though they must speak my own tongue, speak, too, my heart in their words.
Then I reflect just how I may build the new work to perfection:
In this Rome it must lie, as in a setting of pearls,
And it must have the long colonnade of a classical temple,

Through whose spaces is seen freely this Nature outside,
But within the fair temple must rise up the holy inclosure,
Where the high Goddess doth stand, lit from the light of the sky.
Unto her I shall hymn in all the keen rapture of beauty,
Then in life I must have what is her counterpart true;
Naked and cold are these marble joys of ideal existence,
If flesh and blood do not come warming their nudity chill.
Thus I have planned, already the measures are humming within me,
Even I change my gait, for I must walk to their stroke;
Slowly I saunter along by myself on the way of Four Fountains,
Look at Quirinal the grand, rounding a verse to my mood;
See! a shape darts past! in disguise yet seeming to know me!
Hiding itself it appears, willing yet not to be hid.
I must follow the charm and discover this secret of nature:
Ha! it is thou in a mask, telling me still what thou art.

Why hast thou covered to-day the Junonian bend of thy forehead
With that envious hood made to conceal what is fair?
Under monotonous wrappage thou hidest the sweep of thy figure,
That once rose in soft swells through all the harmonies sweet;
And the caress of mine eye thou refusest, unscrupulous maiden
After toying so oft with its fond credulous beams?
Now it is time, I see, of myself to disburden thy presence;
Yet unwilling art thou that I at once should be gone?
Fair dissembler, I know thee; — 'tis an old trick of you women:
You will seem hard to catch when you already are caught.
Strange how early young Amor, divine preceptor, has taught you
That we men love the chase, when we must toil for the game.
Ha! the trouble I see, thou art jealous of stones and of statues!
To the Goddesses fair overmuch time I devote.
Come now, let us talk sense; each word be the word of pure wisdom,

Speedy amends I shall make, reaping the harvest of Rome.
Here sit down at my side, and let me recount to thy glances
What to-day I have found, seeking the treasures of sight.
Quick was my step this morn to ascend the Capitoline Hillock,
There to behold the fair forms which were once worshiped as Gods.
Through the long passage I wandered where, on each side of the gazer,
Hoar divinities look, yet they appear not to look.
Many a shape I beheld of the Cæsars, great men and women;
Dreamful Brutus was there, man with the face of a child;
On a tree leaned the Satyr, shiftless, in sunshine eternal,
While Alexander the Great conquered the world at a glance;
Youthful Antinous gazed upon Fate with the sorrow of ages,
In the center lay Death — turn, let us go back to Life.
Then alone in a joy I slipped to the chamber of Venus,
Who here awaits at her shrine those who may come to adore;

Free of the presence of men was the neat little house of the Goddess,
Who, still loving the laugh, smiles on beholders of faith.
There she stood in her glory, revealing her shape to a mortal,
Though she played with her hand over around and adown,
Seeming to try to conceal from mine eye her fairest perfections,
Which in their form most allure when to be hid they appear.
Ha! the first woman thou art and also the last, in this marble
Caught by a cunning Greek hand fast in thy beautiful lines,
Which are holding all nature forever here fixed in a gesture,
Hiding unhidden thy charm, speaking unspoken thy thought.
Lovely Queen of the Capitol, now I know thee a Goddess,
For thou revealest thy form by thy concealment divine;
From the eye and the heart of the mortal thou winnest devotion,
He is forced to behold what thou dost feign to conceal.
Ere he is ware, he is tranced in the ecstasies deep of thy worship,

Thralled by thy gesture and look, which by refusal allure.
For the assent of thy soul assumes the coy form of denial,
And thy No works a spell deeper by far than thy Yes.
Therein must I adore thee as the divine one of women,
Whose first art is to hide what she most helps to be seen.
But not too far must thou push thy ambiguous play, sportive Goddess,
Else thy shrine will be left by the proud man in despair.
Herein divinity lies: to keep in the distance fruition,
But not hope to destroy in the sweet prelude of love.
Let me be tossed by thy hand like a ball between hope and fulfillment;
Always the first let me have as the choice food of the soul,
But the second — play it before me — a vision Olympian
Which my touch will not bide, though I must ever pursue. —
Thus I spoke to the Goddess, and yet I spoke to the maiden,
Somehow the twain were blent into one shape to mine eye;

Such are the tricks thou playest, O Rome, beguiling the stranger;
Each seems the copy of each, both are the woman I know.
I cannot tell it — which is the marble and which is the maiden?
Breathing the statue now moves, gives a sweet look, then a kiss.

II. Nature and Art at Rome.

Often I know not what I should think of this nudity Roman,
Which in each street and each house meets me and speaks with a charm;
That old world must have been more natural even than Nature,
What a delight in the form! — is it my right or a sin?
These fair shapes of cold marble are altogether too life-like,
Do they cleanse us of dross, or do they rob us of shame?
Classical is the sweet dance of the senses sporting in sunshine,
But the Teutonic fiend creeps on the joy of the South.
Somehow to-day bright Rome is darkened with grim Northern devils,

Which I have brought from my home over the ways of the sea;
The Antique I must leave for a time, its truth is too naked,
Under the ban of the law, ages on ages it lies.
So to-day I shall follow the law, the stern law, though it slay me,
Just for one day I abjure wholly the beautiful world.
Off I run from the city that I get free in the country,
Breathe of the sinless hills, drink of the innocent brooks,
As they leap down the slopes not far from Castle Gandolfo,
By the Alban Mount rocking the cradle of Rome.
See, I have to turn back to that fountain — gone is resistance —
To the fountain of rills where are the washers at work;
Just a moment ago I passed them with fierce resolution,
Now so soon I return, drawn by the spell of the sight.
What is the witchery in yon maidenly shape that allures me?
I am afraid that I like more than I ought what I see.

Bare to the knee for her labor, she stands in the flow of the water;
Why not a nymph of the stream seen by some fabulist old?
Strong is the sweep of her figure like an athlete in wrestling,
Golden her hair falls down in a lone braid to the waist,
Many the seams of rich metal appearing to thread through her tresses,
Shifting their glistening hues under the sunshine and shade.
When she bends up and down, the rise and the fall of her body
Dances me over its waves as I were tossed on the sea,
And the soft tint that blushes her face and blanches her forehead,
Comes from a wind-winged hand held from the tops of the hills.
Nor could the eye-sight easily turn from the hem of her kirtle
Which was trying to hide, modestly naked, the limbs;
Then the vision would wander along her arm's gentle taper,
Till it would drop on her breast, sucking deep joy like a babe.
Through mine eyes I was juggled once into sweet dreams of palpation,

And my looks by her form were into finger-tips turned.
Not in vain, O Rome, have I fled from thy galleries lofty,
Here is the gallery true holding fair life in its bloom;
Nature herself is my guide now eager to show me her sculpture
In the first workshop of Time, hinting the sources of Art.
But I had often to laugh at the passionate gush of the fountain,
As it bubbled and seethed, full of the stormiest love.
Round her ankles it raved, oft trying to struggle up further,
Till the knee it would kiss in a mad fit of desire,
Then it would fall back into the current, by effort exhausted,
Glad to sink into nought, for such a moment of bliss.
Hark within me! a judgment I hear against the wild fountain!
Shall it follow its law which is but Nature's decree?
Shall I follow my law, which, pitiless, makes me its victim?
Or shall I joyfully flow down with the stream to the plain?

Every drop of that rill, though brewed on the tops of the mountains,
In a frenzy appears, it has refused to run on,
But it whirls in currents and eddies around the white members,
Seeking to swoon to a kiss where it might fall on her form.
Some in their vehemence even leap up in the air to behold her,
As if each little globe were a lone passionate soul.
Look! the whole brooklet is now one boisterous flutter of impulse,
Goes where it ought not to go, does what it ought not to do.
Yet how clear and happy it leaps from its mountainous sources!
Nature has poured its heart full of a thrill and a bliss,
And whenever it sees with its myriads of crystalline eyelets
Beautiful things for the sense, it with new ecstasy springs.
Hark again to the law! "Here stay no longer with nature;
Not bare life must thou see, but the fine spirit of life;
Gross are the senses if not transfigured to vision beyond them,

Not for the form must thou love, but for the
God in the form."
Such was the deity's voice, proclaiming the law
of Olympus;
Now I am ready to go, leaving the washers
behind;
Rome, to thee I return, thou hast found the
secret of Nature,
I in thy marbles must find what is the secret
of Rome.

12. On the Tiber.

Look! the God of the River is swimming in
rage down the valley!
Come, let us mount him and ride, testing his
mettle divine.
How he maddens and whirls back his yellowish
locks in the passage!
Thrice he bends his huge form, struggling to
crawl through the town.
In the effort he hisses and squirms and twists
like the Hydra
Till he has wound past the walls, gliding away
to the sea.
What is greatest in action, what in thought is
most regal;
What is most beautiful too, in his three folds
he has caught;

Under the bridges he rolls and sweeps by the palaces lofty,
While he holds in his coils worlds that are old, that are new.
Tell me, O River, what is the source of thy power so lasting?
Why has the Earth such a charm just at this spot on her face?
Enter the pinnace, O Dearest, let us surrender our bodies
To the Tiber's embrace, though he look sullen and dark.
True it is that his forehead is moody with striving and turmoil
From his grim struggle with earth that would confine his free stream;
And his breast is turbid and swollen with throes of his passion,
As he hurries along in a low mutter of wrath.
But when he meets at the end the translucent Sea, his happy beloved,
Lying in boundless repose under the eye of the Sun,
With her he mingles his waters, placid they rest in her bosom,
To her crystal transformed by the embrace of her love;
For her purity washes his face of the slime of the conflict,

All his violent threats turn to the tenderest notes,
And the Tiber is cleansed, though muddy and fretful his humor,
To sereneness and peace slowly transmuting his stream.
Enter the pinnace with faith, and let us be rocked on his wavelets
Into that quiet sea where we behold his repose;
I descry in the distance along the Western horizon
Waters that sparkle in dreams under the glance of the Sun. —
Into the boat she has stepped with the fearless tread of a sailor,
Firmly she grasps the rude oar that overfills her white hand,
Laughingly leaps in the current the boat — I rejoice at the omen,
Woman must labor with man on the rough river of life.
Nay, her lot is the harder both in the toil and the danger,
She performs the great work, he has to idly look on,
She must surrender her body in trust for the being of others,
Often her life she impawns for the new life of her love.

So I look at the maiden plying her oar in the waters,
Whilst with my paddle I aid, guiding the flight of the boat;
Soon the red-pencil of gentle exertion has tinted her features
Toning nature's soft flush into the delicate white,
As amid the pallid and fugitive light of Aurora
Flashes the first-born ray fresh from the red-golden Sun.
What is this mood that I hear attuned to the flow of the Tiber?
Is it the chant from yon church, or an old hymn of the God?
Hark! her arms are thrilling the air into musical measures,
While her hand in response whirls in broad circles the oar;
Forward she moves to the tune of the stroke on the billowy waters,
Backward her body returns, ruled by the rhythmical wave;
Every bend of her form is a note of melodious movement,
Struck from its home in the air, where it is hidden to all,
Save when her grace reveals the abode of the dulcet vibration,

By a mere sweep of the hand, or by a cast of the head.
What can it be that pours in my soul the full goblet of pleasure?
Something my spirit inspires more than her look in its glow;
All my senses are bathed in delicious dew of the fancy;
Something commands these lines with a tyrannical nod.
Now in the shape of the woman I read the first poem of Nature,
As she in Paradise rose mothering all of the world,
In herself I can see her, methinks, as Adam first saw her
Just as she moved in his glance, new from the hand of the Lord.
How I float on the rise and the fall of a river of motions,
To which the Tiber keeps time, hoary old God of the stream!
He too is charmed, and raises his head from the bed of his waters,
Shaking his chaplet of reeds, jealous of mortals he seems.
But there is a whole Tiber within me, on it I am tossing,
How I surge up and down driven by tempest and flood!

Has little Amor grappled the powerful God of the River,
There! see his eye! down he dives — under the surface he swims.
Kind Father Tiber, from the worry and whirl of thy devious current
Bear in safety our boat fleeing o'er shallows and slime;
Then at last to the haven of Mediterranean quiet,
Rocking thy cradle of waves, float us along on thy stream.

13. The Old Titan at Rome.

Fleet run the days as I trip light-hearted from temple to temple,
Though but a fragment the fane, still it hath in it a God;
Let it be but the drum of a column, a piece of a cornice,
In it the nectar is caught dropped from Olympian feasts.
Here is a door in this dark dingy ruin, come, let us enter,
For the deity haunts all the old places he loved.
He will strike us a light if we look with the eyes of the faithful;

Ha, a wineshop it is, here is a God that I know.
Speedily he will illumine our darkness with gleams of his sunshine,
Let us trust him at once that we may find out his will.
Alessandro, some wine! the best from the hills of Albano!
Where on the sides of the mount vineyards are hung from the heights,
And their beautiful tapestry, woven of leaves and of sunbeams
In its quick changes of hue pictures the time of the year.
Speed, Alessandro, fetch while I tell of the wine of Albano,
Be the cup bearer thou, be we the Gods at the feast.—
There the earth is a cinder that glowed with an ardor volcanic,
In the mountain close by, ages unnumbered ago.
Now the blaze is extinct, no longer is heard the contention,
Stygian tasks are performed, days of repose we behold.
But the grape still draws up the glow that once gleamed in the ashes,
Sucks from the soil to itself slumbering sparks for the wine.

So the fierce dust of the Titan who raged long ago in the mountain
Still his spirit contains, still his wild fury imparts.
Then he was lord of yon summits, thence overran the Campagna,
Sweeping adown in his might from his high fastness of rock.
Also a cup he possessed, and still we call it a crater,
Goblet foaming with flames, flowing down over its sides
Into the valley below till reaching the current of Tiber
The red liquid is cooled mingled with watery draughts.
But now behold! in place of the crater of Titanic monsters
Is the wine bowl of man sending up gently its sparks.
Thirsty mortals we are — to our lips it offers refreshment,
While it wakes in our souls Gods that have slept from our birth.
Look! the old Titans still work, have a means of transmitting their power,
And for the men of to-day active they are as of yore.
Though they are dead in the hills and their bones through the valleys are scattered,

Still from their ashes they leap, live a new life in the cup.
'Tis the grape which begets them anew, yet softens their nature,
And has distilled their dark force into a thousand clear drops.
Drink of him, comrade, till the red flashes along thy white forehead
I may behold — lightnings faint, dimly revealing the form
Of the huge Titan, as he once glared from the top of Albano;
Now he can send but a ray which doth illumine the face.
Yet how he labors to loosen himself from the grip of thy reason,
And to drive about wild in a mad frolic of yore!
Drink of him daringly — soon within thee the Titan will thunder,
Two little craters I see darting their flames from thine eyes.
One more drop, Alessandro; we have discovered the temple
And before we are done, we shall discover the God.

14. Those Tell-tales, the Muses.

Fain would I hide in myself these joys of Roman existence,

But they sing of themselves into a verse ere they stop;
Somehow they rise in a rapture and run at their birth into measure,
Leaped they not with their feet, never would they be at all.
So to the world my secrets are told by the garrulous Muses,
Who delight to repeat what tender souls may confide,
And to robe soft whispers of love in the hues of the rainbow,
Singing with passion aloud what is most hid in the heart.
Those vibrations of fiery joy that thrill through the body
They endow with a voice tuned to the music within;
And my timorous fancies boldly they sing to the idle,
Who are quick to repeat all that the gossips may teach;
Even they lead before me my brain's illegitimate children,
Whom I have to disown when I am faced by the law,
Though the Muses malicious take pleasure in making them pretty,
Dressed in imagery's pomp, graceful in movement and song.

But, oh ye tattlers, why did ye point out the brood to the maiden?
She is jealous, ye know, e'en of my thought yet unborn.
To what extremities by your wild frolic have I been driven!
From your wanton excess danger ahead I can see.
Once I controlled the tireless steeds of speech in their chariot,
Now by the Sisters the reins rashly are jerked from my grasp.
Silence, O sable mysterious Goddess of Night, I invoke thee;
Thy divinity now is the first word of my creed;
Bring back the time I installed thee as faithful guard of my treasures;
But thy seal has been broken, trampled thy jewels to dust.
Silence is gold, I have heard — 'tis more, 'tis the deep mine of diamonds
Which illumines itself, needing no lamp of the Sun.
To the man secretiveness is the flower of wisdom,
To the woman allowed is the light play of the tongue.
Thus my dissatisfied self I was propping with new resolutions

When the sound of a voice ran into verses at once:

"But the Muses are women — from them to lock up thy secrets?
To so many sweet lips wilt thou forbid the sweet word?
Ah, nine men would perish weighed down by thy cruel injunction;
But nine women — O fool, what has become of thy wits?
This Italian sun, while heating thy heart into passion,
Also has baked thy brain into a handful of dust.
Mark! thou wilt never again be free of those tell-tales, the Muses,
Hear! they are telling just now secrets shut close in thy heart;
Often already of thee they have told what should have been hidden,
They are not going to stop singing the music of Rome."

15. A Little Roman Olympus.

Speak to me not, for my fancy is caught in a vision delightful,
And with a joy in the soul, who can abide the dull word?
Still I shall feel it and say it and shape it to musical measures,

I must utter myself, e'en if I talk all alone.
Every house is a palace at Rome, it may be a temple,
Which some God doth indwell, Goddess you always will find.
Nay, each room of the house has often a godlike possession,
Visibly deity comes giving his gift unto all.
What is now the delight? The Divine I have seen in a bath-room,
Rather a shrine be it called which to devotion invites.
Many divinities drop down silently into that chamber,
Small is the size of the fane, yet it of beauty is full.
How I happened to come to the place demands explanation,
Here is the story of chance favoring worshipers true.
Long I had trodden the streets from the tops of the hills to the Tiber,
Viewing the fountains of Rome, looking at Tritons and Nymphs —
Forms of the water which leap into life up out of the water
Blowing a stream through a shell, cowering under the waves.
Of a sudden I came to a house which I knew by its door-step,

For I had been there before; quickly the knocker I seized,
Soon the door flew ajar, and a voice I heard at the threshold:
"You are weary, I see; go, be renewed by the bath."
What could I do but obey the command I already had wished for?
In a spiral the stair led me up into the room;
There at the view the spirit took strength even more than the body,
For another small world I in deep wonder beheld.
Clear with a joy lay the fount in its bed of smooth alabaster,
Crystal both of them were, held in each other's embrace.
Nor could you say first which was the water and which was the crystal,
Things so unlike in our world may be transparently one.
On the ceiling above was circling a garland of Amors,
Looking down at the fount which their sweet images held;
All the delights of sunny Olympus arose from their gestures,
As they flew with their feet, as too they danced with their wings;

And their infantile bodies sang with a musical cadence,
Out of their motions of grace wreathing a roundel of love.
Next on the wall, coy nymphs stood out in relief from the surface,
All prepared to descend into the pool at their feet;
Some, half unrobed, were playing amid the trees of the forest,
Others, bared to the zone, wound in a knot their long hair.
One, the fairest, had entered the limpid laugh of the water,
Under the crystal you see lovely proportion of form.
But on a pedestal yonder, above the glass of the fountain,
Turning her glances aside into the mirroring depths
Crouches Cythera. Happiest here she looks in her temple;
Idly her garments are thrown over the vase at her side;
Outlines of light are flashed from her body as fine as the sunbeams,
Through a universe fair wholly made up of herself.
As she beholds her true image returned from the water's reflection,

She has that which she is subtly revealed to herself.
Yet with a smile of content at the view, she is playfully seeking,
From her own eyes to conceal guiltless enchantments of form;
She would appear to be modest, aye, methinks to be bashful,
Willing again to unknow what she has willingly known.
Is it knowledge's modesty, or is it modesty's knowledge?
Were not Nature so near, I would maintain it were Art.
Whom dost thou see, O Goddess, what face peeps out of the water?
Lies beneath it some God, thence to behold thee in stealth?
Art thou playing, playing alone with thy sweet secret fancies?
And alluring art thou to thine own beautiful shape?
Look! there is in the fountain one who is furtively gazing,
But the intruder art thou, caught in that mirror and held;
Now thine image is slowly transmuted to Mars, to thy lover,
And from his mirrored glance thou art pretending to hide.

Bather divine, forever sporting in joy with thy fancy,
Which, unknown to thyself, pictures another's fond face
There in the fountain floating mid dreams enraptured of beauty,
Feign from his glance to conceal what thou wouldst have him to see,
Softly transmute the coarse senses to the fine spirit of vision
Which doth the Goddess behold in the fair forms of the world.
Everything in thy walls is divine, O Rome the eternal,
Thou art the sum of thy works, yet thou art also thyself;
But of all of thy works so divine, thyself art divinest,
Thou art all of thy deeds, yet thou art something far more.
Each little mark on thy face is a line of Olympian grandeur,
And in thy presence to-day each little man waxes great;
Thine is the power to stretch out the soul, the small soul of the mortal,
Till it the universe fills, though thou art ruins and dust.

Even to bathe is a worship at Rome, a festival splendid,
At which are present the Gods, nor do the Goddesses fail.

16. Anticipation.

Which is the sweeter, the love of thy art, or the art of thy loving,
I cannot tell O Rome, both of them are but one joy,
And they spring from the same deep sources within the man's bosom ;
Let him look into himself, there he the fountain will spy.
Often I follow the one, but come in my search to the other,
When the marble I seek, lo, it is life I have found.
Love of thy art blends into the art of thy love in my journey —
All without my design, I cannot help what I am.
Often I query: Now which is the Goddess and which is the mortal,
Both to Olympus belong, both too, belong to the earth.
But in these verses, I know, is hidden a tempest of trouble,

Which is sure to break loose when I recross the great wave;
When out of reach of classical eyes beneath native beeches
By some shepherdess fair I am enthralled once again.
If I offer to pipe in her ear a pastoral ditty,
She will quickly demand: "Where is thy maiden of Rome?
Whose proud name thou hast woven in many a garland of flowers,
Where I have read it oft mid their delicious perfume?
Well do I know she wore thy bright circlet of bloom and of blossom
In the pride of a queen crowned with her jewels and gold.
But no longer renewed by thy hand, the garland has withered,
Under its wilted leaves it has become full of spines.
All the sweet hours of beauty and love it has turned into torture,
On the pitiless thorns blood may be seen from her brow.
For thy poetical nosegay thou pluckest the heart of a maiden,
Then thou leavest to wilt both the fond heart and the flowers."

With excuses and circumlocutions and fiery denials
Singeing the garment of truth, scarce can I make a defense:
"Pooh? that girl! she was only an allegorical maiden
Whom I found in Rome, using her just for my verse."
"Talk to me not—you poets are fond of our heart's vivisection,
Bleeding the warm pulse of love that you may color your lines."
To explain the old to the new is no easy matter,
Many a fable I try tinted with imagery fair.
Prevarication is a rough road that always is jolting
Into a stammer the tongue when it may travel that way.
So I shall writhe under glances showering sparkles of anger,
Fickleness is the reproach, if not a worse charge be made.
What a horrible gallows is built of poetical measures,
If the poet must give rigid account of his lines!
Say, shall prosaic propriety throttle divine inspiration,
Or shall Pegasus still have the free range of the clouds?

But be silent, O Muse, let us take the warning in season,
Gently rein in our steed, lest we be cast from his back;
Pegasus always mounts too near the planet of Venus,
With the loose Goddess to stray even in heavenly fields.

17. Art and Life.

Chilly and stark to the touch is the crystalline form of the Goddess,
She could make no response, if you would give her a kiss;
Therefore it is that I have to go back into life and the living,
Then I can see with the touch, then I can touch with the eye.
Thus I learn of the spirit that runs into lines of the marble;
Rising from sight to the soul, feel I an infinite sense.
Rome, to-day thou art old, I too have grown old in thy ruins,
To the fountain of youth I must return for a drink;
I am exhausted, I can no longer draw breath from these statues

Till again I behold all of their outlines alive. —
"Thou art getting gray hairs, I can see one streaking thy temples,"
So I was teased by the maid, merry with youth's sparkling wine.
"That I deny," was my answer of warmth to the fell accusation,
"I have been snowed in not yet, by the fierce snow-storm of years."
Ere I could turn she had plucked out the fiber of envious silver,
Held it up to mine eye laughing in triumph the while,
With the clutch of despair I grasped at the horrible trophy,
Still it dangled above reach as I might for her hand.
"That was a coward," I cried, "from the one do not judge the whole army;
He alone has grown pale hearing the tramp of the years
In the distance, as they advance with slow-stepping phalanx,
On the fortress of youth hurling the frost of old Time."
While I was speaking, with dexterous hand she caught out another
Then another till three there she had conjured to view,

Three pale ghosts from the grave they suddenly rise on my vision,
And a message they bring blasting with terror the soul;
For they are heralds, and they announce with the sound of the trumpet,
That the dread tyrant, Old Age, comes and will soon be in sight.
Rigid as stone I gaze at the specters more dire than Medusa,
Now my head will be bleached white as the snow by the fear
And to-morrow I, an old man, shall rise with the Sungod,
Totter along down the street robbed of the half of my life.
But O hear her, the brave and the youthful, chase off the monsters
That are gnashing their teeth over my head in the air,
For she speaks sweet words which are winged with arrows of Amor:
"Give me to bathe my hot hand in the fresh rime of these locks!
I would like forever to sport in the flakes of the snow-fall,
And my lips I would cool on the fresh brow of the frost."
Up, let us go; I now understand the spirit of marble,

Now I can see fair life move into lines of the stone,
And from the Goddess' lips I can hear the unspeakable secret,
As in my heart I behold how she becometh divine.

18. Experience.

As I wander about in a joy from ruin to ruin,
And from this church to that, where I may find an old stone,
On the way I hold it a duty to peep into wine-shops,
Which are happily ranged just on the path to the Gods.
Oft I have tested the soul of the grape from Mount Fiascone,
And the mad Titan I know lying on many old hills.
Yesterday, let me confess, I took too much of the giant
Who imparts his sly wrath still through the mild Alban grape;
Treacherous is that draught when served from thy hand, Alessandro,
For thy grace adds a drop trebling the ardor divine.
First, a gentle succession of gleams illumed my horizon,

Giving new suns to the day, hanging new stars in the sky.
Soon it grew to a blaze, through the brain the lightning volcanic
Flashed like a tempest unchained mid the wild waves of the sea.
Then I saw in my dream the huge Titan rise up from Albano,
Belching his fiery blasts with the mad eyes of revenge
'Gainst the clear sunny home of Jupiter high on Olympus,
Where calm reason and joy dwell on the heights with the Gods.
How he bellowed and roared and grimaced in angry defiance!
Dire was the pain of the cramp wrenching his bowels of stone.
But there followed the mighty eruption, when the sick Titan
Burst with retching his sides, all overflowing the plain.
After his labor he fell into sleep, and I along with him
Slept, till Apollo the bright laid his soft palm on my face.
Now I am but a handful of ashes, like the old Titan,
Scattered and sprinkled about over the fields and the hills.

Alessandro, no more of the giant to-day, I must gather
First my poor trunk and my limbs which have been strewn far and wide;
Henceforth I want but a drop of him, two drops or a wee third drop,
Just enough for a flash or a low growl of his wrath.
His inspiration I wish to possess without his convulsion,
Give me the might of his glow yet under reason's restraint.
Temperance now is my gospel, convincingly preached by this headache;
But to-morrow once more set me the pearl-beaded bowl.
Too much divinity hath to-day overwhelmed me, poor mortal!
Still the God I must know, though he consume me in wrath.

19. Palingenesis.

Though these stones have been dug from the Earth and set up in museums,
Thou must excavate still all of them just where they are,
In thy life here digging them out of the dust of the Ages;

This old world now afresh thou must discover thyself.
Better it were to let it sleep on in the tomb it has chosen,
If it be not born with a new birth in thy soul;
Do not disturb the dead, if thou canst not give resurrection;
Living and speaking with thee let them arise out the Past.
Here in death I find life enwreathing the tomb with its figures,
Over the coffined dust festivals sport in the stone.
In a circle around this sarcophagus leap the wild dancers,
Even the ashes repose mid a perpetual joy.
Look! the dead have a chorus of marble eternally moving!
Thou must divinity see smiting the world into nought,
And so making it live and last in new shapes forever!
Learn the ways of the Gods, though they appear in their wrath,
Though they strike thee down to the dust in the stroke of their presence:
Men can know the Gods only by feeling their blows.

Book Second.

Ex Urbe.

I. Confession.

Much have I told thee, O reader, that nears the forbidden,
Much have I left untold sparing thy blushes and mine.
Was the old world more innocent, or only closer to Nature?
Having so much more of sin, have we so much more of shame?
Still I would reconcile freedom of yore with modesty modern,
Veil the sweet love of the South in the chaste soul of the North.

Rome a Paradise thou, still hinting the Paradise naked
Of old Adam and Eve, ere the first fig-leaf was sewed.
I can feel already I am too sinful to stay here,
Out of this Garden so fair I shall be driven off too,
But not to-day. Arise once more, ye Gods and ye Heroes,
Aud ye Goddesses too — I am not done with you yet.

2. Vision of Castaly.

Tell me no news of the rest of the world, keep the newspaper from me,
Quitting the continent new, I would live back in the old;
Cæsar's hardiest soldier, Ovid's luxurious rival,
Horace's friend I shall be, sharing his wine and his song,
Sipping the sparks of old Massic and singing sweet Lalage's laughter:
When I am in old Rome, I an old Roman shall be.
And to the school I shall go once more, to the poets of Latium,
But not a book I shall read less than two thousand years old.
Backwards further and further I move, for thus I move forwards,

Aye, beyond Rome I must go, she is not wholly her own.
Every road leads to Rome, but mine, I can see, leads through it,
Till I come to the source sending its beautiful rills.
Now in my mind I look on the fountain of Castaly limpid,
Whose clear waters reflect all the fair shapes of the soul,
As like bubbles they rise from the bottomless depths of the Fancy
Seeking a birth into Time with the rich dower of form.
I beseech the bright Nymph to hold up before me her mirror
That I may see the new brood whirled into life in my brain,
That I may see them, and quickly may draw their shadowy outlines,
Ere to Lethe they sink, whelmed at their birth into gloom.
If but once they should fall back into that stream of oblivion,
Orpheus e'en with his lyre cannot allure them to light.
Now in my thought the world rises up as when ruled from Olympus,
And to the beautiful halls each happy deity goes;

All of the Gods are marching along in the fragrance of movement,
While the Goddesses' forms echo the music of folds.
There I catch a sly glimpse of the harmonies hidden of Venus,
Racking with rapture the look as she descends to the bath;
But to-day with Paris I was on the Idæan mountain
Where three Queens undraped stood in divinity's glow,
Unto my mortal vision revealing their beauty immortal;
Tinged with blushes divine, from me the judgment they sought.
Long I looked at the movement of life in Castaly's mirror,
Where is seen what transpires both on Olympus and Earth.
Often I try to fasten in lines what I see in her waters,
With a pencil antique limning Olympian forms;
Yet, O Castalia, beautiful nymph of the crystalline ringlets,
Not alone do I see images held in thy hair,
But thee too I behold, thy translucence unselfishly giving

To reflect other forms while thou art hidden thyself.
Jealousy never thy candor distorts or thy purity darkens,
Though a rival thou art to the Olympian Queens.
Thee I long to behold in thyself, in thy fountain at Delphi,
As thou risest above, out of dark chaos below,
Showing thy beautiful form in the sheen of the God of the sunshine,
Who from his temple near by sings thee his wisdom and song.

3. The New Prometheus.

Once my soul was a monk, and my body was then but his cloister,
Daily I hid in my cell shunning the joy of the world;
Out of my thoughts I plaited a whip of hundreds of lashes,
Which would strike of themselves inwardly turned on my mind.
My delight was to find new ways of being tormented,
On my dissatisfied self madly I wielded the scourge.
But in Rome I am free, in the city of monks and of cloisters,

Fire has driven out fire, yet it has left me afire.
So a new trouble has subtly now taken the place of the old one,
Still the delight, O the delight just in the twinge of its pain.
Can it be that I have been playing the rogue and have stolen
Under Amor's wild lead flames that belong in the skies?
Let me confess — 'tis the fire of Heaven, and it I have stolen,
Hidden it deep in my heart visible scarce to a God.
Ah Prometheus, hoary old sinner of ages Titanic!
Still thy example misleads, nor can thy penance deter.
Led by the beautiful flash and the sparkle I toyed with the flamelet,
Wished it soon to be mine, slyly I took it along;
Then I went to my walk in the grove of Villa Borghese,
Nursing the spark with my breath, dreaming of raptures to be.
Jupiter, mightiest God of Olympus, jealous of mortals,
Missed the fire from his hearth, when his high palace grew cold

From its absence — for he, though a God, is warmed in its ardor,
Even descends from the skies for the luxurious flame;
Danae, Semele, witnesses be ye, with thousands of others,
Who earthly lightning aroused in the Great Thunderer's breast.
Casting his all-seeing eye through the nooks of his limitless domains,
Me he beheld down below fondling in fancy the flame,
Wrapping it over and over in layers of images Roman,
Making it dance to a tune drawn from the music of Greece,
As beneath the cool shade of a laurel, beside a clear fountain
I was lying in ease shunning the heat of the day.
With the soul in a dream there mingled the sound of the waters,
As they murmured and sang with the sweet voices of nymphs
Called Naiads — who chirp in the brooks and dance in the fountains —
Water no longer assails but it encourages fire.
All at once a vulture swept down through the branches umbrageous,

Sent by Olympian Jove, ruler of men and of Gods,
And infixed in my heart his beak and eats of it daily,
Daily it groweth again furnishing new his repast.
Chained to a pitiless rock now behold me, a second Prometheus!
I forever am gnawed, never consumed or relieved.
What can I do? — Good soul, await thou heroic deliverance,
For thy Hercules comes, mighty endurer of toils,
Who subdues the dread birds of the air for his people. I tell thee,
Jove with his thunderbolt barbed can not detain thee in pain.

4. Metempsychosis.

Days come alike with the Sun, yet different some are from others,
Some to the future belong, others go back to the past;
All of to-day has been floating about me an old reminiscence,
I have lived in a world born long before my own birth,

And I am at this moment no more than a memory ancient,
Which is straying around, lost in the present by fate.
Hoary philosophers meet me and speak, Pythagoras, Plato:
"Now you may know what we meant when we discoursed of the soul."
This high hour is not of to-day, it is an odd moment of Homer,
Which into sunshine was dipped once when in Chios he sang
Thousands of years ago — perchance before *him* it was singing —
Now to the earth re-born, it has come singing to me.
Through a long gallery built of the ceaseless addition of ages,
Voices oft drop on mine ear that have reached down from old Rome;
And as I go up the street and walk under arches triumphal,
What is that shout on the air peopled with millions unseen?
Yon red obelisk heavenward pointing its finger of granite
Is still telling the tale once to the Pharaohs told;
It is also a traveler, far from its home it has wandered

Where it first saw the God kissing the land of the Nile;
Centuries long it stayed in its city of light by the River,
City built to the Sun at the new dawn of the world.
But the moment arrived when it too had to start on its journey,
Rounding the circle of Earth, seeking to come to itself.
Stopping at Rome it stood up for ages, then fell and was buried,
But resurrected you see all of its body once more,
Here by the Lateran patiently waiting for new transmigrations,
For again it must fall, it must arise too again.
What am I but a wanderer here, an obelisk, statue!
Mid these ruins I stray that I discover myself;
I must see what I was when a Greek I was born or Egyptian,
Pilgrim I come to my Rome seeking the shrine of my Gods.
Soft flow the hours, O maiden, if fondly thy lips are attuned
That they utter low notes borne from thy bosom of trust;

For whenever I hear the tale of thy life and thy longing,
It is the sound of a voice echoing down ancient halls;
And I behold the hoar shape from which thy soul is descended—
The proud soldier of Rome who in thy words comes to life.
So after thousands of years the spirit returns to the body,
From its wanderings dark down in the realm of the shades,
And once more it puts on new vestments of youth and of beauty,
Fleeing dim Hades' abode, clad for the light of the sun.
Of its former dear self it retains many dark recollections,
Which still guide and forewarn, whisper of sorrow and joy;
And the woman if she delight in some ancient action
That enkindles the page where the high record she reads,
Till her heart is wrapped in the flames of a passionate genius
Which with its power unknown makes her far more than herself—
She was the hero, she was the soul that gave birth to the action

In the bright world long ago. But if the deed be a myth,
Shaping to beautiful words the spirit of long generations,
Words with high fantasy's stamp, coined by the Poet divine,
Who can charm hoar fabulous shapes from the cave of old Silence
Into the light of the Sun — then too that myth was her work,
Sprung of her soul into flesh again dipping its fiery essence,
Still recollecting the forms which it created of old.
O my brave maiden, now tell it, for thou wert the singer heroic
Of the glorious deed, hung like a lamp in the sky
Of far-off antiquity — lamp that illumes all the ages —
Yet with thy praises festooned, now a new glory it shines.
In the olden republican times I can think thee a poet
Framing fierce fables antique which first to-day I have heard
Told with the glow enkindled alone of the primal conception,
Firing the soul of the bard when he deep destinies sings.

5. An Old Legend Re-incarnated.

Tell me a story — a story that touches thy heart, Roman maiden,
For the atmosphere sweet, which is surrounding thy thoughts,
Filling the hours with visions of youth and tenderest passion,
I would breathe in by day, then I would dream in by night.
From thy fancy let me but charm thy favorite legend,
For I long to descend into the fountain of youth
And to drink of its bright limpid waters just as they gurgle
From their source, thy heart. There I may see deep below
Images floating transparently chased in pearls of mild beauty,
Which reveal to the eye lands that are filled with thy dreams.
Rare is the flower of speech, just tipped with the dew of young honey,
Which distills drop by drop from the sweet lips of the maid;
Rare is the vision unrolled in the fount to the look of the drinker,
Who would fain swoon away into that world of bright forms.

Rose-bud of Rome, here growing in fondness over the ruins,
Which still furnish the soil whence thy fair bloom sucks its life,
Whose dark roots sink down to the temples of Gods and of Heroes,
And to the Present upbreathes fragrance that comes of the Past —
Tell me a story while yet I can see by the glimmer of sunlight
Thy swift flashes of red wreathing thy lilies with love,
Modesty's sky blushed through by gleams of innocent passion,
Heralds announcing thy tale truthful to nature yet pure.
" In the time of old Rome there lived a beautiful lady,
And in old Rome, you must know, every lady was fair,
Now they are few, and none of them are so fair as the ancient;
Noble this lady was too, bearing a name that I love;
She was called Cornelia of Rome, 'tis the name of my mother,
And has remained in our house long as a family name
For the women, since we have come of her blood — we know it —

In a straight line we can trace out of old Rome our descent.
Well, this noble Cornelia, this beautiful lady I speak of,
Also a dear mother was, mother of beautiful boys,
Two of them; no such beautiful boys can be found in the city
Now, for the city has changed, people within it have changed.
But how proud she felt as the mother of beautiful children!
Roman boys, perchance soon to be great men of Rome.
Think all the day, and dream all the night of two pretty children,
This Cornelia did, proud Roman matron of old.
For they were boys — and not for a moment could she stop thinking
What they were to become when they had grown to be men.
Once some fine Roman ladies came to visit Cornelia,
Finest dresses they wore, jewels and gems set in gold;
They besought her that day to put on her costliest garments,
Covered with rubies and pearls — stars cannot twinkle so bright

On the clear sky above — and then they begged and they coaxed her
With them to sweep down the street showing her beauty and wealth.
Oh, methinks these dames of old Rome were surely the mothers
Of our women to-day, so much alike do they seem;
Often I notice that thistles and weeds spring up without planting,
While the harvest dies out under husbandman's hand.
But what answered Cornelia the Roman? These are my jewels,
Pointing down at her babes, who were asleep in their crib.
O the beautiful children — two boys! methinks I behold them
Lying with thick little arms folded in sweetest embrace.
Think what it means — two boys! when grown to be men they are Romans!
Senators greater than Kings, conquerors, too, of the world."
So spake the maiden, till speech seemed lost in the flow of her fancies
Floating away on a sea known to her vision alone.
Still O maiden, I mark in thy words the mother of heroes,

And thy kinship is traced not in the lines of descent,
But in the spirit, more truly kindred than blood or the body,
Stamping its seal on the act, clearer to read than the print.
Deep is thy rapture to image thyself the mother of Great Men
Born to rule the whole world, as from Olympus the Gods.
Yes, thyself thou hast named, hereafter hold fast to thy title,
Young Cornelia of Rome, mother of possible sons
Like the old Romans, men of the mightiest will and of action:
Thy great son, may he make Italy great as of yore!

6. Tiber and Arethusa.

Swollen and angry seems always the brow of the God of the Tiber;
He has a right to his wrath if we but think of his lot;
All the drains of the earth and streams that wash alien countries
Have been gathered by time into the torrent of Rome,
To be sent down her channel afar to the limitless ocean,

Which doth lave every land round the new shores of the world.
But now behold this fountain of joy that runs through the city!
Greek Arethusa has flowed under the sea into Rome.
Where the Greek rivulet pours its transparency into the river,
The stern frown of the God drops into dimples of joy;
Thither I love to saunter at random along the bright border,
Till the clear waters be lost, lost in the turbulent wave.

7. The Two Muses.

Two fair daughters were born to the ages, Camena and Musa;
Giantess grew up the one, swaying all men to her will,
While the sweet sister has always remained a blooming young maiden,
Sixteen summers she has; 'tis the old story of love.

8. The Two Streams.

Clear are thy fountains, O Hellas, as out of the hillsides they gurgle,
And in a crystalline stream flow through the valley and mead;

Small are thy rills, oft leaping along in channels of marble,
Often reposing in grots under cool arches o'ermossed.
Larger than they, but turbid, is ever the rush of the Tiber;
Give me to drink of thy brook, small but transparent and glad.

9. Looking Backward.

Where do these temples look with their faces of pillars and friezes?
Where do these monuments point, with a set finger of stone?
Where do these statues that fill with their forms vast halls and museums
Turn when they whisper of home, hinting of destiny rude?
Where but to Hellas, the happy abode of their freedom,
Ere the Roman had come, thralling their beauty to use.

10. The Sigh of Hellas in Rome.

Rome, I have fed with peaceful delight on thy honey delicious,
Daily I open new hives built in the ages of yore.

Dead long since are the bees that gathered these
stores of enjoyment,
Heliconian swarm, reared on the flowers of
Greece.
Still the sweet structure of cunning instinctive is
not as they left it,
Broken and scattered and stained are all the
fragments so fair.
Yet each fragment distills a clear liquid infused
with the nectar
That long since down to earth fell from the
tables of Gods.
Roaming amid ancient forests of pillars, now
fallen and broken,
E'en from the fissures and breaks I have been
catching the drops.
What delight at the draught went throbbing in
waves through the body?
Was it the mildness of art, or the mad wild-
ness of wine?
Ah! this moment there follows the surfeit of
gratification,
Ruddy enjoyment now palls, Rome can no
longer delight.
List! there is aught in these marbles that hints
of an ancient estrangement,
A low sigh may be heard out of the heart of
the stones:
"We are but captives taken to grace a con-
queror's triumph,

Out of a beautiful world which we had made
for ourselves;
Here our lot is to seem and to serve in the house
of a master,
O for our Hellas once more; O for our
freedom and home."

II. Art.

Art must be a true worship of Gods, not merely
enjoyment,
Goddess is the high Muse, scorns to be used
for desire;
Dizened with jewels of strangers, her honor at
once is suspected,
Clothed she must be in the robe which she, a
Goddess, hath woven.

12. The Great Fall.

Speak, O Quirites, and tell me, ye Cæsars, your
fall, your great downfall,
When into ruin the world sank with the Gods
in the crash;
Read me your doom, ye Senators, Censors and
great Imperators,
Kings in your palace once, some of you Gods
in your fanes;
What did ye do, maimed rows of sad marble, to
call up this judgment?

Misery broods in your pomp, beggary breeds in your homes.
But what saddens me more than all the long pang of your city,
Hellas, the fair, I behold lying in rags on the street:
Her I now see as the beautiful slave that served in the temple
Built by the conqueror Rome, with all the peoples of earth;
Free no longer and pure, she lost her heavenly figure,
Though she was decked with the wealth ta'en from the spoils of a world.
Forms and abodes of the Gods, she, a slave, no longer created,
Once a Goddess herself, sprung of Olympian seed.

13. A Translation.

I am everything ancient and modern at Rome, the eternal!
Here on this spot where is all, how can I help being all —
Past and future, the high and the low, the good and the bad, too?
Lawgiver Roman I come weighing the law of the world;
Conqueror lordly of Britain and Gaul, I triumph in wine-shops;

Orator ancient at times, thunder I Cicero's phrase.
But I am now the new schoolmaster, old Latin poets construing
Once again in my school; ye are my schoolboys, O friends.
Come, gay Horace with amorous Ovid, Catullus, Propertius,
All of your verse I shall turn into plain English at once:
"Captive Greece was the beautiful mistress kept by Quirinus,
Throned she lay in his heart, spurned from his morals and law;
Thou wilt know the result. She debauched both his heart and his morals,
While with her honor's loss, lost was her beauty divine."

14. An Oration.

Conscript Fathers of Rome and of Time, a speech in your Senate,
One short speech — that is all — now I am ready to make —
Not the plentiful silvery stream of the Orator Roman,
But brief barbarous words shouting the cry of these stones:

Not enough, O Rome, to enslave the whole world to thy surfeit —
Thou hast enslaved the Gods, slave thou art now to thyself.

15. Premonition.

Now I must leave thee, O Rome; there is a loud clock in the city,
Tolling the limit of time when the sad guest must depart;
Louder still I can hear the stroke of the clock in my bosom,
Smiting with hammer of steel: now I must leave thee, O Rome.

16. The Two Guides.

As thy virtue, O Latium, is mad, so thy pleasure is beastly;
Hellas enjoys and refrains sweetly together in one.
Thou art, O Roman, either too good or too bad for my journey;
Thou, O Greek, art a man, come, let me take thee along.

17. The Two Cities.

Looking before me I see happy banks in the skies built of sunshine,

Looking behind me I feel clouds in mine eyes
full of rain;
Why are the heavens there full of joy, and here
full of sorrow?
Rome I am leaving behind, Athens is lying
before.

18. Retrorsus.

Now, O Rome, is my path where point thy
fingers of marble,
Where thy speaking stones say is the land of
their birth,
Where is the home of the forms that uphold thy
arches triumphal,
Home of the urns of thy dead, wreathed with
fresh flowers of life.
'Tis the secret command of thy heart, O city
imperial,
Now the fountain to find whence is derived
the stream.

19. Prorsus.

Swinging on high between two visions seemeth
my journey,
As the pendulum swings back from a tick to a
tick;
And on the clock of the world I am marking the
weightiest moments,

As I sweep to and fro through the dead ages
embalmed.
Substance fades to a dream, but the dream soon
hardens to substance,
Huge Coliseum recedes, Parthenon rises to
view.

PART SECOND.

Epigrammatic Voyage.

Could I but give to thee half the delight in reading these verses
That I feel as I make all of them leap to my beat,
Surely our friendship would be in this book forever recorded:
Vain is the hope, thou hast too many other good books.
Still I shall write it, doing my best to please two persons,
Namely, myself and the God; hardly the third I expect.

Romæ, Kal., Oct. 1878.

Book First.

Italy.

1.

On the Sea.

All the sea was a smile and a twinkle was every wavelet,
Cheerily flew the white sails big with the favoring breeze,
And the ship — the new ship — bore away to the goal of her voyage,
While the steersman in sport dallied with water and wind.
Merrily under the touch of the rudder is rocking the vessel,
Rising a little above, falling a little below,

Eager to dance on the sea with the billow and romp with the sunbeam,
While the wares in the hold safely to haven it brings.
Epigrams, rise! your voyage begins, now rock with the vessel,
One with the sway of the ship, one with the storm and the calm.
Be ye the soul at the helm, and be ye the voice of the helmsman,
Be ye the sea and the land, be ye the present and past.

2

Festive processions of Nereids drawn by silver-reined dolphins
Wind in the curls of the sea, curled by soft Zephyrus' hand;
Shell-blowing Tritons rise up and announce the approach of Poseidon,
Then sink under the tide to the hoarse note of their shells.
Look o'er waves to the line of yon blue, 'tis a festival splendid,
Thousand of deities hoar float round Poseidon's moist car.

3

Royal Poseidon has harnessed his horses to his blue chariot,

White flow their manes in the wind as they are racing to shore;
On the surface they play with the infinite movement of water,
Dancing the dance of the sea over the caroling waves;
But as soon as they brush underneath on the strand's pebbly bottom,
Broken and foaming they fall headlong against the hard beach.
Noble thy steeds, O Poseidon, and ever the more to be valued,
That no feet they possess which can step out of the sea.

4

Roguish, light-winged epigram, boldest rover of Hellas,
Robber too of her sweets, lurking on all of her ways,
Little pirate on poesy's ocean, now I have caught thee;
Give me some of thy spoils else I shall crush thee to prose.

5

Wavelet, why dost thou seek to walk out of thy kingdom of waters,
Where is woven thy robe out of the blue skies?—

Nereid, why art thou trying to leave the gay train of Poseidon,
Losing thy beautiful form at the first touch of the land,
Thou wilt but flounder a moment among the rough stones of the shallows,
Watery film are thy hands — they cannot cling to the earth.

6

The God's trident hath not the sole power to rule on the Ocean,
A fair girdle I saw fondled and kissed by the waves;
Each of them sought it, lovingly pressed it a moment, then lost it;
O the great hand of the sea, how it would clutch for the prize,
Trying to hold in its watery grasp that girdle inconstant,
Which through its fingers would slip — vain was the task of a God.
Laughing it swayed to the rise and the fall of the refluent bosom
Sprung of the billowy spume; here Aphrodite once rose,
Here now she rises again from the wave and is free of her sea-robe,
Stands at the helm of the ship, changes its course to her spell,

Hanging her zone on the rudder; I knew it as soon as I saw it!
Oft have I seen it on land, plaything of Eros her boy.

7

Eros, I warn thee, in this epigrammatical voyage
I shall not take thee along, put up thy arrow and bow,
Breathe not thy flattering breath on my words, stop caressing my fancies,
Thou art too much of a boy, I am too much of a man.—
But the sly rogue laughs hundreds of sweet little epigrams at me,
Hundreds and hundreds they fly, filling these classical skies.
He hath stolen my weapon poetic and turned it against me,
As from the War-God he stole buckler and spear and the sword.

8

Epigram, tell me, gay charmer, the source of thy wonderful genius;
Turn now thy verse on thyself, thee by thy light let me see,
And in a distich behold thy true face by double reflection;

Rise, Hexameter, there; follow, Pentameter, too.—
"Curious voyager, why break open my virginal treasure?
Touch but my two little lips making a mouth for thy kiss."

9

Thou must behold in the sea not merely the sea but the image
Mirrored down in the deep, changing to forms of the Gods;
Water, as water, is always insipid, without its reflection—
The fair Nymph in the brook, Nereid under the sea.
But if no Deity thou canst behold in the rill or the ocean,
Peer once more in its glass, there thou beholdest thy face.

10

Epigrams scatter I over my page like the shells of the mussel
Which on the bottom lie strown under the rollicking waves;
Reader, be thou my pearl diver, valiantly plunge in the waters,
Say thy prayers first, ere thou sink down to the depths;

Then will a beautiful Nereid lay on thy finger a mussel;
Raise it and crack it; perchance hid in the shell is a pearl.

11

Epigram, speed thee, be a little more epigrammatic,
In but a distich's sweet kiss press me thy two tiny lips.

12

Water I saw once thrown on the sunshine in order to quench it;
All of the water was spilled, but the bright sunshine remained.

13

At a bright coal of fire a wasp grew angry — he stung it;
His fine stinger was clipped, but the coal glowed as before.

14

Whither, O whither, my frolicsome boat, is the flight of thy swan-wings?
Daringly enter this stream pouring down into the sea,
Pouring down into the world through the gate of the past to the future;

Narrow thy course to its banks, wind with its turns through the plain,
Till we reach in our voyage the highest Olympian sources,
Sailing on sea and on land, sailing up mountain and sky.

15

In the Olives.

As I passed underneath, there fell the gray leaf of the Olive,
Pricked with a needle of frost, 'twas the first leaf of the fall;
Gently it lodged in my hair, and found too a frosted companion,
Which had there stealthily crept, stealing along with the years.
There lay the leaf, and it stroked me as if the soft hand of Minerva,
Her sweet benison gave out of her favorite tree.

16

Why has the frolicsome Olive been called the tree of sage Pallas?
See the green branches of youth gleam with the silver of age,
Poesy's juvenile buoyancy blent with grave wisdom's reflection;
On each leaflet behold choruses danced to the sun.

Then look up at the fruit on the twigs suspended by handfuls,
Such is the Goddess' gift; take it, 'tis thine, if thou canst.

17

Under the Olives I wander, silvery green is the sparkle,
Dancing about on the leaves with the new rays of the sun;
Fruit is just turning dark to mature along with the season,
While the skipping gay hours diadems weave on the hills.
Crude and green on the branches is hanging still many a berry,
But this sun in the south quickly will ripen them all.
Long I loiter delighted, though always I sigh for the harvest,
As I look up at the limbs laden with layers of fruit.
Tarry until the green leaf of the tree-top is struck by the hoar-frost,
Not an olive matures till it be smitten by fate.

18

A slight frost often touches before the harvest will ripen,
The crude growth of the tree softens to mildness and strength;

From the foliage words of the Goddess are silently dropping,
"Gather the fruit, O man; hasten, thy harvest has come."

19

On the Mountain.

I can tell you a secret about the ascent of this mountain;
If from below you look up, why, it appears but one top
Which you can easily reach, but it is a long series of summits,
Each one struggling above with pleasant valleys between.
When you have reached one summit, there breaks overhead yet another;
Thus you laboriously climb, viewing a height ever new.
Loiter, I pray, at times in the vales, in the folds of the mountain,
There the flowers will bloom, there too the shepherd will pipe.

20

Crystalline folds, as they lie on the form of the Goddess, thou knowest,
They can be seen on this mount resting serene in the sun;

What are the dingles and dells that roll in millions of wavelets
Down the sides of the slope, but the mild flow of the folds?

21

What a wild symphony heard I to-day on the top of the mountain!
Foremost came the small bee piping soprano above,
Then the big bumble bee slowly was droning his note, the deep basso,
While the fly on his flute played a soft alto between.
Thousands of fiddlers were daintily touching the strings of their fiddles,
Large and little were there, tuned to the key-note of clime.
All were at work on the flowers, not thinking they made any music,
Still their work ever moved to the sweet music they made.

22

Stop and listen! here is the mead and there is the mountain;
Soft tones echo from both if thou wilt hear them alone;
Give up thy breath for a moment! catch the new voice of all nature!

Thou must not think of thyself, if thou wilt hear what it says.
One deep note it becomes now, swelling above the whole landscape,
But thou wilt lose it at once, if to repeat it thou seek.

23

Loftily over the brow of the mountain is hanging a ruin,
Ready to tumble beneath, seeming to sink in itself;
Once it was peopled with monks, but now it is held by the Dryads,
Who have re-taken their home, whence they were driven of old,
Now I can enter the cloister, a member become of their order;
Bring me a hair skin of moss, wreathe me a cowl of green leaves,
Clothe me, O Nymphs, in embraces, hang on my lips your caresses,
That by your rites I become here in my cell a good monk.
How I can sing in these ruins — let them fall inside and outside;
On this fresh cloistered moss how I can sleep — let it grow.

24

A dark ghost was flitting alone through the walls of the cloister,
Mid the ruins it sped, vanishing soon into mist;
What could it be? The last monk. The fountain there laughed more clearly
As the Nymphs of the stream saw the lone specter depart.

25

Here I rest in the far-glancing, sun-roofed temple of Phœbus
Spreading over my head through to the ends of the world;
Far below in the vale is the olive-green floor of the tree-tops,
Pillars are mountains of stone holding the golden round roof.
Such my Pantheon is now, where all of the Gods are assembled,
Holding a festival free, in an Hellenic high strain.

26

With his fingers of gold now softly Apollo is feeling
Over the breasts of the hills, drowsy as yet in the dawn;

Like a fond waking husband he turns with a face full of splendor
To his sweet spouse, the earth, golden caresses to reach.
There she is lying with bosom burst out in the glow of his glances,
She, with a smile half asleep, gives the response to his touch.

27

Here is the flower, the holder of honey, transmute it to verses;
Six white leaves form a star, looking above at the stars,
Often diverse is the size, and varied is often the color,
Purple at times it becomes, vanishing faintly to blue.
Inside golden it is, where shines too the bees' sweet treasure;
Pluck it up from the ground, plant it anew in thy soil.

28

Small is the mountain, but of its sweets thou canst gather a mouthful,
Or a hiveful perchance, if thou art truly a bee.

29

In the Vineyard.

A stray bird came to Delphi and pecked at the grapes of the vineyard,

Drunken with juice he began strangely to sing
a new song.

30

Epigrams always are hanging over my walks in
long clusters,
Attic grapes they are, full of the juice of the
clime;
On the path of my journey I roam through antique
vineyards,
Many a bunch I receive plucked by the grow-
er's own hand.
All are not equally good in the bunch, some are
small, some are green still,
Pick them off one by one noting their various
worth.
Every grape must be crushed with a thought, not
stupidly swallowed,
If thou wilt feel the light glow lit in the grape
by the God.

31

Drops that were craftily hid in the clusters now
gather in gushes,
Break from within the soft pulp out of the
heart of the grape;
Long has the droplet been ripening there in the
joy of the sunshine,
Earth, air, heaven above, all have been giving
their aid;

And the old vine-dresser many a year has been
training the branches
Just for thy rapture to-day; here thou hast all
of their gifts.

32

Wouldst thou know the sweetest, sublimest
lesson of Nature,
What the Poet repeats in the keen flash of his
words,
What Divinity utters gliding a-down from
Olympus,
What, too, Philosophy says in the deep cast
of her brow?
This it is: from the soil sips each little mouth of
the rootlet,
From the rootlet sips uninterrupted the grape,
And from the grape sips man the immortal, the
top of creation,
Dowered with reason divine, like in his form
to a God.
Rootlets are tipplers, intoxicated are all of the
clusters,
Bacchanals too are the vines, crooked and reel-
ing around.
See them rise from the earth to a deity, wreath-
ing his body,
Gently diffusing their juice; note thy example,
O man.

33

The coy blink of this virginal wine is my treasure forever,
Maiden sincere as the word which she inspireth in hearts;
Let me now touch, ere Time slip away, my lips to the virgin,
Who doth smile in the glass brimming immaculate love.

34

Mortal the eye is and so must remain, still it sees things immortal;
High Bacchic pomp it beholds in but a cup of the wine;
And in each drop uplifted to lips from the fount of Castalia,
Bathers divine it can see sporting white limbs in a stream.

35

By the Way.

One, O Greek, was thine eye and thy soul, in a harmony splendid
Both together were blent that they no parting allowed;
Sight was insight to thee, and thought a transspicuous image,
Thou didst see with thy soul, soul too beheld with thy glance;

In thine eye as a mirror were seen all the colors of nature,
Calmly reflecting therein depths that belong to the soul.

36

Poesy cannot behold her own flight to poetical regions,
When she looks back at her wings, then is she fallen to earth;
She must soar to the goal in her rapture, not think she is soaring,
Fair she also must be, — let her not think she is fair.

37

Why so modest, my dear little epigram, poesy's sweet-heart?
I would thy lover be now, lisp me thy tenderest word. —
Voyager, I cannot say I am modest, because I am modest,
If I could tell what I am, then thou wouldst love me no more.

38

Fond epigrammatist, thou art my lover, be not my betrayer;
Leave me my virginal charm, else thou wilt spurn me thyself,

Seek not my maidenly mystery wooing the love
of thy verses,
Else not a line, not a word can I impress on
thy lips.

39

Placid thy speech, O Homer, transparent it runs
like the brooklet,
Under the surface we see Nymphs in the fount
of thy words,
Freely disporting their forms, and revealing
divinest perfections;
Now with the brooklet behold always the
Nymph underneath.

40

To a nest of bowls I am fain to liken these poems,
Outside and inside are bowls, each can be seen
in the one;
And yet each is itself altogether, cannot be
another,
Thou must the inside discern, if thou the
outside wilt know.

41

Hercules had two fathers, a mortal and an im-
mortal,
So had Theseus bold, Attica's pride and
defense:
So has every Hero filled with mighty endeavor,

He is the child of some God stealthily gliding to earth.

42

Why is the father of Heroes often the weakest of mortals?
Why so seldom the sons have the endowment divine?
Some invisible strand winds through our domestic relation,
Which reaching up to the Gods, draws a Promethean spark.
Two are the households of man and his kinship ever is double,
To an Olympian hearth, though here below, he belongs.

43

Wake not love in these epigrams, be a little more careful,
Leave thy caresses, O Muse, which thou dost drop in my lines,
Well thou knowest my weakness, and laughest a verse at my purpose:
A suspicion I have that thou wilt waylay my words,
Catching them up from my lips before I can train them to duty;
In these epigrams, Muse, wake not my love with thy kiss.

44

Art thou sick? Then go out and list to the little musicians,
That by the hundreds now pipe under the half-bursted buds;
Hark to the strain! they turn each tree-top into a fountain
Welling melodious jets high in the air overhead.
Find out what they are singing as they now greet the new spring-time,
That will heal thee, my friend; it is great Nature's first balm.

45

Guess me the maiden I love, the maiden most beautiful, dearest,
Who hath never yet known that she is beautiful, dear;
But if she turns and looks for a moment into her mirror,
At her glance her own face vanishes out of the glass;
I can stand all the day and gaze at her beautiful image,
If she herself takes a peep, then she is fled from the world.

46

Out of the sky came an eagle, it dived to the earth for a weasel,
Then it soared to the clouds rapidly, passed out of sight
Into ethereal regions; soon from its eerie in cloud-land
Down it fell dead at my feet, with its heart's blood on its breast.
What had become of the weasel? From its high-soaring victim
I could see it run off to its old hole in the rocks.

47

Voyage you call it: But tell me where are the sea and the vessel?
Under my feet is no plank, points of the compass are lost.—
Epigrams, friend, are the whole of my craft, now a ship, now a shallop,
Thoughts are the timbers inlaid, fancies the fluttering sails,
And I float my epigrammatical fleet on an ocean
Laughingly yielding its wave to the soft breath of the Gods.

48

Reader, I deem thou already hast quit me thy voyager epigrammatic,

Fallen perchance by the way, quite overcome by fatigue;
Still I often shall hopefully call thee as if thou wert present,
With me a friend I must think, though there be really none.

49

Naples.

On the strand overborne by the frown of high Posilupo
Stood I and looked to the sea praying Poseidon to rise;
Soon came the God at my call in his chariot over the surface,
Through the bright waves of the sea cutting a track of quick light.
But as he neared the low shore and touched the firm sand of the shallows,
Horses and chariot and God broke into foam at my feet.

50

In the soft arms of Poseidon is the dear home of the sea-nymphs;
Do not decoy them away from their abode to the land;
Dost thou not see that no feet they possess to rise up from the waters?
Watch them far out in the main, sporting bright shapes in the sun.

51

Naples, true is thy title to-day, thou art still the new city,
Old thou never hast grown, though on thy head lie the years
By the thousand. Neapolis, Grecian youth is thy dower,
Which the old Gods to thee left in their retreat from the world.

52

On a hill whose summit looks over the sea, and whose forehead
With fresh laurels is wreathed, flapping their leaves to the breeze
Is embalmed the Latin Bee mid the bloom of his flowers,
Whence such sweetness he sucked that we must seek him to-day.

53

Here are the vines introduced long ago from the vineland of Hellas,
Here amid their embrace Virgil of Rome lies entombed,
Who with Italian winepress extracted their delicate juices;
May he forever repose in the Greek fragrance inurned!

54

Grapes of sweet flavor I tasted to-day from the Mantuan vineyard,
Which transplanted had been from their Hellenic abode;
Sweet were the Mantuan grapes, yet sweeter the thought of that vineyard
Whence they were taken of old, whither the moments all throng.

55

Watch the gay festival pouring a torrent of joy down the Corso;
Hark! what thunder is that rumbling beyond the clear sky!
Flower-girls, lazaroni, dancers, pulcinelli—
Stop! did the earth underneath quake to the beat of your feet?—
Pleasure's happiest poor-house, stronghold of King Macaroni —
See! a red flash in the sky glares on the city and land;
Look off yonder, a dark bloody hand with thousands of fingers
Reaches up from a peak, clutching at Gods in the skies.
There stretched over this city now full of the joy of existence,

Hovers destiny's hand, threatens as in the old world.

56

The Neapolitan butterfly danced on the heights of St. Elmo,
Spreading bright wings to the sun, drawing the look by its tints;
When it lit on a flower, I slipped up slyly to catch it,
But from my fingers it flew ere they could close on its wings.

57

What a story is read to thee daily, O beautiful Naples!
'Tis the Pompeian tale lying just under thine eye,
Written in ruins whose letters are lines of tenantless houses,
Alphabet mighty of Fate carved on this hill long ago.
'Tis the old story of Hellas, the story prophetic of Nature,
Thy new story may lie writ in this ruin, beware.

58

Pompeii.

Language of Destiny, lettered in furious flames on this mountain,

Was not then taught in the school, still it is hardly taught there.
Reader, if not yet asleep in the rise and the fall of this voyage,
Open thy senses afresh, now we are going to spell;
Wake! 'tis the hour to learn an alphabetical lesson
In this wonderful book; here is the Pompeian school.

59

Ages on ages were working in Rome the mighty destruction,
Which Pompeii befell in but a moment of Time;
Rome, too, had her Vesuvius gathering fire and forces,
Through her duration is strown what is here pressed to a point.
There it is written in large, and here it is written in little,
In the fate of this town might she have read her own fate.
But she could not decipher the words of the flaming inscription,
Which revealed her own deeds turned into symbols of fire.

60

O Pompeii, what shall we say to thee rising from ashes
With thy body scarce seared, oft with the hue on thy cheek?
Thou hast ages on ages of death entombed in thy features,
Still to-day thou art up, in thy old seat on the hill.
Many believe hereafter will be resurrection of body,
But of the old buried town, look, resurrection has come.

61

Wander at random through vacant doors and paths of the city,
Lose thyself in the net woven of houses and streets,
Till thy brain becomes Pompeii alive in its mazes;
Dreams have fled out the way, now thou art in the old world.

62

From these stones worn deep by the tread of old generations
Premonitions arise strangely suggesting our lot;

Man is mixed of a moment and of eternal duration,
So say thousands of feet stamping their trace in the rock.

63

Here you enter the Pompeian wineshop and ask for refreshment,
Quickly the waiter responds, dips with a long-handled cup
Through the small neck of this wine-jar piercing the slab of the counter;
Cool and pure is the bowl, crown it again with a wreath.

64

This is the temple of Venus where once she was fervently worshiped,
Beauty in figure divine as she arose from the sea;
Fain would I too be a worshiper, enter her temple this morning,
Move mid her pillared grove to the fair idol within.

65

As we pass down the street, there opens the door of a mansion;
Through its interior peep, swiftly the vision is borne
On the flight of the long colonnade to the green of the garden,

Whither the columns are winged, but can not fly to the goal.
Whose can it be? Thy dwelling, O Pansa; pardon intruders;
Long art thou absent from home; now it is ours, here we are.

66

When I beheld thee, Medeia, I seemed to behold the Greek woman
Painted by artist of old from a strong face in his heart;
Her I now seek for in body, until I shall find the same features
And imprint them within — image remains not a shade.
This is the fruit of the journey: to see in the mirror Hellenic
What the world once was, what is now fairest and best.

67

O the maiden Hellenic, each house in the town hath her picture!
Soon she comes out of the door, tripping the pavement along.
Softly the waves of her garment roll down all the lines of her body,
And the rich crown of her hair is by the Graces entwined.

Out of the folds of her robe there rises sweet fragrance of movement,
As the bare forearm she lifts daintily from the white plies.
What can you do now but follow? What I pray are you here for?
At the turn of some street, quick, you may glance in her face.

68

O fair boy, around this urn where thy ashes are resting,
Nymphs are dancing in glee to the mad flute of the Faun;
Joyous was ever thy life, each day was the bloom of a banquet,
Through this gate of the tomb on thou dost leap with a laugh.
Still with this rout of merry musicians and dancers around thee,
E'en old Hades will smile, all his dark grot will be lit.

69

This is the Pompeian school-house where anciently swayed a grim master,
Open still is the school, enter and study its book.
Scholars have come and are gone, to-day they are coming and going,

Pedagogue too can be seen, if thou wilt glance at thy side.
What is here taught do you ask? The reading and writing of ruin;
But what is learned from old bricks? Epigrams, spell him the word.

70

Many an image doth lie in thy ashen embrace, Pompeii;
Statues repose there unviewed, till they awake in the sun;
Ancient legend, writ on thy walls, is born into color,
Gems lie there in the earth, cut with the lines of a Grace.
But of all of the images that lie hid in thy bosom,
Greatest by far is thyself — Destiny's image art thou.

71

Destiny's workings within our world thou deeply dost image,
We thy affliction lament, though we are blessed by thy pain;
For the Gods have done thee a wrong, but mankind a blessing,
Suffering smiteth the part that the great whole may be saved.

72

Destiny smiteth the one with her scepter, that all be forever;
Slayeth this moment of Time, that so Eternity be;
Evil she is to the moment, but to eternity holy;
Wrecked she Pompeii then, hence thou beholdest it now.

73

Vesuvius.

Who is the giant now under Vesuvius near merry Naples?
Dead he is not but he breathes heavily as in a dream.
What is he dreaming? Dangerous visions of fire and sulphur,
As in some passion he rolls, turning from this side to that.
Dead he is not, but alive, though just at this moment he sleepeth;
What will he do when he wakes? See the scarred face of the mount.

74

O Vesuvius, thy torn lips loudly speak a new language,
Hot are thy thunderous words, breaking out deep from thy heart,

Orator ancient, red is the stream of thy speech to thy people,
Dark and fateful thy breath furiously winds to the Gods.
What art thou saying, O Titan? Thy mighty foreboding interpret?
Aught there is underneath wrecking the world overhead.

75

Hesiod, seeing Vesuvius we have to see with thy vision,
And to think with thy thought all this upheaval of fire;
'Tis thy song of the battle between the new Gods and the Titans,
Clear thy hint underneath flows in thy speech as a rill.
Look! our pathway Hellenic has wandered now into thy poem,
Here is the work of the earth, there is the word of the bard.

76

Here a peep thou canst take deep into the smithy of Cyclops,
For the King of the skies see now the thunderbolts forged
Which he hurls in his wrath at the wicked. Then look down the mountain,

Thou wilt behold all his foes — pierced they lie strown with the shafts.

77

Titans I saw whose limbs had been scattered all over the mountain,
Writhing still they lay skewered by bolts of high Jove;
There with bundles of limbs wound together fell huge Hundred-Handed;
Knotted in wrath are his thews, vain is the effort to rise.

78

Often I wonder if still at some jar in the whirl of the ages
That old war of renown is to be kindled afresh,
Namely, between the Titans and Jupiter, near to Olympus,
For authority's right over the sons of the Earth.
If so, will the Olympian father again be the winner,
Or on him will the hills this time be piled by his foes?

79

Jupiter's chain holds him down, but somehow he always recovers,
Often he makes the attempt from his low bed to arise.

Battles have no end, though thousands of ages asunder,
Titans put down in old Greece, will in new Italy rise.
Battles have no end, they have to be fought over always,
Victory masks in defeat, could we but see all the Gods.

80

Fickle Victoria, daughter of Fortune, forever is changing
Into the form of her foe, giving her plumage to him;
Bright are her feathers, strutting erect all over her body,
But each tick of the clock strips a small quill from her wings.
She in the happiest moment of triumph begets her own victor,
Who will pluck her last plume, leaving her naked Defeat.

81

Mountain of fire that once overwhelmed the fair plain of Pompeii,
Is thy master a God, or a fierce demon in wrath?
See thy best and thy worst deed into one action united,

Thou by destruction hast saved what else had perished by Time.
Provident kindness looks out from the mask of wretched disaster,
Evil and Good in one shape ever are fatally blent.

82

Agony, printed in Lava, is read from this side of the mountain;
See how thousands of snakes lie intertwined round a heart;
Now they are cold and of stone, though once they upreared their long bodies,
Writhing and hissing through flames in the fierce torment of pain;
Now they are but an image which has been moulded by Vulcan
Deep in the smelted Earth where his dark forge is at work.

83

Vulcan doth mould in the underworld too, there ruled by the Titan,
Fearful and vast are his shapes poured at the Cyclops' dark forge.
Better I love his works that are made in Olympian workshop,
Where he dwells with the Gods, filling their world with his forms.

Beautiful Venus, his spouse, there wreathes her laugh in his labor,
Near him the Graces abide, casting their glance in his shop.

84

Homely Vulcan, begrimed is thy hand as thou smitest the anvil,
Channeled through soot on thy front burst the great torrents of sweat,
Shaggy the hair on thy chest upsprings like brush on the hill-side,
And among Gods thou art lame, limping about at thy work.
Still a God thou, whom all men will adore, for thou fixest
Beautiful forms that would wilt, were they not touched by thy hand.

85

Look now back at the blow — Greek deities smote thee, Pompeii,
For degrading their forms, ravishing wildly their art;
All their passions thou hast without their Olympian spirit,
Gods for thy ornaments are, Goddesses, too, for thy lust.

86

O what joy in this epigrammatical voyage, what sorrow!
Out of two threads it is spun, both are in me and in thee,
Both are in Rome and Pompeii, the pain and the pleasure of being
One with the soul of all time, one with its bloom and decay.
Epigrams, come, let us go, we must haste to the end of our voyage,
Gladly and sadly we leave, ancient Pompeii, farewell.

87

The Adriatic.

Roman, colossal thy will, gigantic thy virtue, I fear thee;
But thou canst not enjoy, senses will turn thee to swine.
Why must a man be a demon in hell, or a saint in high heaven?
Why not a man on this Earth, dowered with body and soul?
See, our voyage has strayed to the path of Grecian Ulysses,
Who the Sirens could hear, yet of their talons beware;
And the magical draught he could drain of fair Circe, the charmer,

Still he remained a true man, could even rescue his friends;
Years upon years he stayed in the bower of sweetest Calypso,
Never there losing himself, never forgetting his own.
He has enjoyment, he has restraint too, both in one body,
Both in one soul he unites, making the music of life,
As it is sung in thy melody ancient, poetical Homer,
Rocking my modern refrain on thy harmonious seas.

88

Questioner, crafty Ulysses, subtlety made thee a skeptic,
Intellect stirred up the doubt always at word of the God;
Boldly thou wilt not believe in the promise of Goddess Calypso,
Till she has sworn the great oath by the dark river of Hell;
And no faith thou showest at first in the words of the Sea Nymph,
All the Gods thou dost doubt, till they have proven themselves.
Even Pallas, thy mighty protectress, must show her own wisdom,

Ere she could win thy belief that thou wert come to thy home.

89

With thy guidance I too have reached the bright land of Pheacians,
Where Alcinous dwelt, wonderful monarch of eld.
This is his island, upon yon hill overlooking the harbor
He with his counsellors sat, grave with the thought of the State.
Often about the true site of Pheacia the learned have striven,
Playing at blindman's buff in the dark garret of lore;
Everywhere thou must see it, on land, on island, on mountain,
Thou must see it in Greece, anything else is not seen.
Mythic Pheacia, beheld by Ulysses, is actual Hellas,
Imaged beforehand in words dropped from the lips of the bard,
Borne from the thought to the deed by the hero — a prophecy splendid
Of one beautiful world heralding others to be.

90

What a wonderful raft was made at the grot of Calypso,
From thy cunning of hand shaping the thought of thy brain?
That was the parent whose progeny now glides over the Ocean,
As the bird in the air, braving Poseidon's fierce ire.
Well may we pardon the wrath of the God divinely foreseeing
How this child of that raft scornfully sports on his waves.

91

King Alcinous, thy fair palace has had fairer offspring!
Thou art ruling the world still by the beautiful form.
Out of thy mansion majestic was born in a song the Greek temple,
Sentineled round with a choir — Titans columnar of stone,
Bearing forever their burden to hymns of a Parian measure,
Wearing out heaviest Fate to a Pindaric high strain.
Look! those boys of thy garden with tapers are moving to statues,

Seeming to walk into stone while they are bringing the light;
Hellas springs out of thy palace all sculptured with actions heroic,
Even the God we discern turning to marble by faith.

92

Happy if each of these poems may rightly be called a small temple!
First the colonnade pass, then you will come to the cell;
If you enter the deepest recess, you will see the fair Goddess,
And the worshiper, too, bent at her shrine in low prayer.

93

Poets, if they be poets, are makers, making an image
Which is to stamp old Time into his thousand-fold forms,
And each thing of the senses, each piece of indifferent matter,
Sealed by their touch with a soul, draws a full breath of the Gods.
Thou, old Homer, wert the first builder in Greece, the first carver,
Afterward she could but turn fancies of thine into stone;

Architects followed thee, building thy poem aloft into temples,
Sculptors followed thee too, thinking in marble thy line.

94

On thy watery way I am sailing, endurer Ulysses,
I look down at the waves, there is the scowl of the sea,
I look up at the storm-cloud, here it shattered thy vessel,
Yonder I see too the height which then encouraged thy heart.

95

Wise Ulysses, thy work has been done for thyself and the ages,
Thou has suffered for us, all who may read of thy pain;
Fighting thy desperate battle with Fate, thou hast fought, too, our battle,
Freeing thyself in thy deed, us in thy word thou hast freed.
Such is forever the hero, we share the reward of his sorrow,
What he has done for himself, is for the rest of the world.
When through Hades he goes, he takes us too in his journey,
When he to Ithaca comes, we are along, here it is.

95

The Outlook.

Reader I beg thee to step to my place on this ship and look forward;
Gladly to thee I would give all that belongs to myself.
Over the light-curling ripples is sportively rocking the vessel,
On the sea to the East, whither our voyage doth tend.
Now we have come to the water once ruled by the might of the Sea-god,
Who in his chariot of waves rolled through his stormy domains,
Who could rouse up the soul of the Sea with his trident or calm it;
Now we have entered the world sunnily built of the Myth,
Slowly transmuting itself from the fancy down into the senses,
Fables of ages we see drop into Nature's own garb.
Look far out on the line of the waves, there rises Poseidon,
Heaving the billows suggest presences subtle within,
Proteus ancient, daughters of Nereus, thousands of daughters,

Triton, who blows on his shell to the deep
music of seas,
Old Oceanus, Tethys the mother with floods of
her children,
All know their worshiper new, peer from the
wave and salute.
It is sunrise, but in front of the sun is a mountain,
Piled on its top lie the clouds bordered with
fringes of beams;
Helios cannot be seen now, still thou wilt know
it is sunrise,
Out of an opening deep slants a long armful
of rays,
And from many a crevice are breaking great
fragments of splendor,
Which I would catch up in speech, turning
their sheen into verse.
But O behold! before thee is resting the sunland
of Hellas,
Bursting the mist of the morn over the space
of the sea,
Clouds have left but a belt of thin gold bent
round the horizon,
Mountains are singing a song from the high
seats of the Muse;
Leap to the shore and gather the world's most
radiant moment,
As it here shone in the past, here it is shining
to-day.

96

O Corallion, see yon cloud in the heavens above thee:
It is rain or snow — chilled are its drops or are warm?
I would like to be rained from the clouds down into thy window,
Or a snow-flake be — drop on thy lip and there melt.

97

Eros, much of my life and my lay to thee I have given;
Faithful vassal in verse, I would repose now awhile,
Till I write these epigrams. Hear! to these wandering children
Would I tranquillity lend, joys of a ramble in spring
Mid the quiet of hills, in the golden repose of the sunbeams,
Voiced with low murmur of brooks, far from thy passionate call.
Later again from thy torch light a fire, a new fire in my bosom,
Fiercer than ever before kindle my tongue to a flame.

98

Now we are passing from Italy fair into beautiful Hellas;
How shall we cross the gulf over the roar of the waves?
Is it a bridge that I see or is it a phantom of fancy?
Eros has built it, I know — to his sweet guidance I trust.

Intermezzo.

Pastorale.

CORYDON.

Where hast thou been, O Tityrus, where hast thou been, errant shepherd?
For thou hast fed on some sweets that in the mountain grow wild;
Fragrantly wreathes thy breath as it subtly pervadeth the cabin.
Filling with incense the air fit for the home of a God;
And thy words, too, thy words are tenderly laden with fragrance,
As they drop from thy tongue when thou art telling thy tale.

Strange that the sound of thy voice is transfused with the odor of flowers;
Tell me, where hast thou been, Tityrus, where hast thou been?

TITYRUS.

Wandering lone in my journey I came to the ridge of Hymettus,
And ascended the hill thence to look over the plain;
There I lay down to repose in the shade mid the herbs and the flowers,
Whiling the hours away watching the bees at their work.
Thence I followed their flight by the hum of the air of the mountain,
Till I came to their stores which I then sipped to my fill;
And I have learned how to find the sweet treasures of blooming Hymettus,
Daily now honey I have, else I am sure I should die.

CORYDON.

Thither, O Tityrus, let me go with thee, I too have a longing
To behold the fair mount hiding such wealth in its rocks.
Give me to silently breathe of the air of the thyme-scented hillside,

And at melodious work golden bright hummers to see
Driving their wings in the sunbeams; through the rocks let me follow,
Till I may taste the sweet drop stored in Hymettus away.

TITYRUS.

Corydon, go — thou must find for thyself the sweets of Hymettus,
But before thou set out, treasure this warning I give:
Twain is the being of man, composed of the soul and the body.
Twain is Nature herself, made up of good and of bad;
And Hymettus is twain, of the bees and the goats the one parent,
Both thou must take by the way, if thou dost wish to be all.
Sip the sweet honey drawn by the bees from the heart of the flowers,
But thee I warn — thou wilt pass through the rough tract of the goats. —
Yonder comes Phœbe, the shepherdess lonely, still she is flouting,
I must be off to my flock — farewell, my Corydon, go.

CORYDON.

Shepherdess, hear me, now is the spring and thou art the flower,
Hoary old Time with his scythe tarries to look at thy bloom;
I can see him standing at rest before the young harvest,
What a glow in his face! ardor is burning his veins.
Blame him not, he grows young in thy youth, turns red in thy rose-bud;
Not a word thou hast said, still thy sweet whisper is heard.
Now I too have to yield, and answer thy bloom with my blossom,
Come, the whole world is a flower which we are plucking just now.

PHŒBE.

Shepherd, pick up thy crook from the ground, I pray thee, be modest;
Go thy way to thy herds; look, they have need of thy care.

CORYDON.

Finest droplet of sweetness is sipped from the earth by the flower,
On the flower alights, sipping its treasure, the bee;

From the stores of the bee sips man, of sippers the highest,
All the sweetness of earth he must distill into life.
Soil and flower and bee are a channel for fountains of nectar
Ready to gush in thy mouth; touch now thy lips to the stream.

PHŒBE.

Modesty, sweetest of maidens, is not aware she is modest;
When she knoweth herself, then she is never herself.

CORYDON.

Modesty's speech is always a silence that tells she is modest;
Never declaring her own, hath she the sweetest of praise.

PHŒBE.

Never can Modesty, e'en in a dream, proclaim her own nature;
With but the word she is lost, fled at the sound of her voice.

CORYDON.

Spring has now come, she covers the prostrate earth with caresses,

Show me the lover who yields first to the thrill of her lips;
I believe it to be this willow. Look at the leaflets
Breaking out over the bark, at her soft passionate touch,
Row after row; then glance at the willow-bound brook in the meadow,
Far you can follow its bend, traced in the foliage new.
Next in her love is this group of saplings, fair youths of the plantain,
Dancing a chorus of twigs tuned to her amorous breath.
This old oak is the last of the forest to yield to her rapture,
Bare still as winter his boughs, fringed with dead leaves of last year.
But even he is beginning to smile and respond to her kisses,
See this outgushing bud throbbed from his savage hard heart.
Heart of oak, yield thee, this is the season of soft Aphrodite,
This is her land; stout Mars threw down his shield at her glance.

PHŒBE.

Nature is now a fair maiden who dresses herself for the marriage,

Come and look at her thus, all her old lovers she lets
Into the secret of her betrothal that comes with the spring time,
She will take no offense, modestly peep at her ways.
Over her body she draws in her triumph a flowing green garment;
Emeralds under her touch burst from each bud on the bough;
Garlands of blossoms she winds round her bosom, velvety, vermeil,
Here they are white with her hand, there they are blue with her eye.
Ha! the bright face of the bridegroom peering just over the mountain!
'Tis the new sun from the skies flinging his gold on her path.
Now her song she begins, her sweet passion from all of the tree tops,
With her each bird on the twig chants its own bridal refrain.

CORYDON.

This, sweet love, is the fairest moment of spring, this moment;
Soon it will pass on its way; quick, let us go to the fields,
Where it will tarry the longest around the new tops of the woodland,

Over the roll of the hills vanishing into the haze.
All the year has suddenly bloomed in this day, in this minute,
The whole world is a flower, fragrantly blowing just now.
Every rise of the sun hath seemed in some joy to look forward,
This is the moment it saw far in the glow of its eye.
All the days of the year have been climbing above to this summit,
Now each tick of the clock sadly must knell their decline.
But thy journey of life has now touched its most beautiful moment,
Hold it fast in thy heart — that is thy conquest of Time.

THE TRIO. — FINALE.

Sweet was the voice of the shepherdess, tender the word of the shepherd,
She always looked on her babe, he always looked on his spouse;
Under the shade of a plantain she nursed her first little infant,
While the lambs lay around shutting their eyes in the sun.
Thou, young wife, art born over again in the life of thy offspring,

Motherhood too is a birth, mother thou art and
a babe.
Mark! each suck of the stout little lips at thy
plenteous fountain,
Each little kick on thy heart changes thee into
thy boy.

Book Second.

Hellas.

1

Each faint rustle of branches above is a Goddess' whisper,
Each petty murmur of brooks is a low laugh of the Nymphs,
And a sweet little epigram steals from the glance of each maiden,
Dew drops hung on each leaf are the pure tears of the Muse.
But the miracle is, thou too art becoming a poem
In this clime of the Gods; wonder, O man, at thyself!

2

Here on this spot knit together are sea, and valley, and mountain,
Here is the youth of this plain by the old hills overlooked,
Here is the joy of the senses, but mingled with warnings of wisdom,
Here are the flowers of Spring wreathing the fruits of the Fall.
Hellas, a universe thou! so small and yet thou art able
Clearly to image the world, which, though it was, is to be.

3

Hellas, I look at thy body now lying down under my vision,
Over thy bosom I peep, heaving to mountain and peak;
Athens, I see thee, the head of this beautiful body of Hellas,
From the blue waves upraised, cushioned on violet beds,
Brain-born child of the brain-born daughter of Zeus the Olympian,
Who hath named thee her own, doubly endowed with her mind,
Fathered of father of Gods, and mothered of mother of wisdom;

There is Acropolis too, which is thy battle-lit eye,
Glancing afar on the sea, yet smiling on blue Attic hill-tops;
Of this Athenian eye look in the pupil so clear,
That is the Parthenon, sunlit, reposeful, the Goddess' dwelling
Out of it flashes a beam lighting the soul of the world.

4

Quarrymen seemed I to hear as they smote the deep rock of the Muses,
For the pure white leaf on which to grave a new word;
Often the hammer resounded afar through the vale of Ilissus,
Temples and Gods into life moved at the sound of the stroke.
Over the water came echoes from Rome, enfeebled by distance,
Laden with dust of the past Europe gave answer to Rome.
Last came the echo of hope, unbodied it rose from the future,
Crossing Atlantic tides mightily heaving between.

5

To the violet summit I climbed of strong Lycabettus,

Bound are its sides with the rocks made for eternity's walls;
There I picked but a weed as it struggled alone through the crevice,
Raised it up to my lips, thoughtlessly strolling along.
But how gracious the flavor that cunningly touched all the senses —
Flavor distilled by a weed merely from Attica's rocks.

6

Mad are my eyes! to-day they are merrily slaves of my fancy;
A Greek maiden I saw who through the ages had dropped;
She was one of the forms that danced in the chorus of Pindar,
And she sang his high hymns, moving to music of flutes.

7

Merry Anacreon, many an epigram tells of thy days and their joyance,
And thy epitaph too ever is written afresh;
Wine and Love and the Muse made thy life one intoxication,
Even thy death is a feast lighting grim Hades with joy.
All made thee drunk, the twitter of swallows, the chirp of cicadas,

Love of maiden and youth, gift of mad Bacchus as well.
Nature becomes a melodious banquet, reeling in verses,
Roses and ivy and vines twirl round thy lines with a laugh.
But the most maddening draught to thyself and to me is thy poem,
A true singer thou art, on thine own song thou art drunk.

8

Far I rambled to-day through the grove in the vale of Kephissus,
There in the Olives I found hidden a blackberry grot,
Laden with fruit was each pliant bush, yet hung with fresh blossoms,
Dark were the berries that shone through the white wreath on the stalk.
Now it is winter, yet see the full fruit alongside of the flower!
Ripeness of age in this clime has the fresh blossom of youth.
I approach the fair harvest desiring to taste the new flavor,
Also the fragrance to scent breathed from the flowering shrub.
Heigh! what a rustle of wings is flapped from hundreds of birdlings,

Who a festival held hidden in berries and buds.
Far through the orchard they scatter, then drop on the tree-tops;
Hark! what a melody trills out of the silvery leaves!

9

O the mad Attic joys now dancing aloft on the mountains!
And the gentler delights tripping through forest and stream!
Armies of happy existence move out of the trees and the fountains,
Whole new peoples spring up over the emerald floor,
Slipping into the world for a moment, then slipping out of 't,
Hark, the new song they begin suddenly over my head.

10

Scattered along on my journey are many old fragments of marble,
Showing a crystalline smile on the sere face of the ground;
Still they gladden the wanderer mid the dull rubbish around them,
Though they be but the chips left by some workman of old.

These were the fragments imprisoning sunny Ionian columns,
Till by the chisel set free out of the fetters of rock;
These were the pieces in which was nestled the form of the Goddess,
Look once more at the shell whence the great Pallas escaped.

11

Once this plain, now so rocky and thirsty, was full of dense foliage,
Rich aviaries of song were all the tops of the trees,
Whence a perennial runnel of music ran down from each leaflet,
Nourishment sweet for the tongues lapping melodious dew.
Still I can see in this soil green sprouts of many a sapling
That would the grove restore where the high singers once lodged.

12

Look over Attica! deserts of rock are her fields and her highlands;
Orphaned of warblers she seems, orphaned of trees for their seats;
But a sharp search will discover still many a little low bramble,

Wherein birdlings sit piping a wee tender note.
When to-day I had found a green bush, it was full of young singers
Warbling some old Attic chimes tuned to ancestral high strains.

13

Through Attic meadows I stroll; I come to a grove of broad poplars
Where the shepherd breeze plays a low note on his pipe;
Round the roots of the trees is running on pebbles the brooklet,
Murmuring strains to the brink, fresh from the home of the Nymphs.
But the tree-tops have given a refuge to sweet Attic singers
That from their leafy abode throw out a fountain of song;
List to the wealth that they fling on the air in melodious revel,
Hundred-throated with joy in the debauch of their strains.

14

On this classical soil one cannot help being an augur —
Watches the feathery flight, lists to the humming of wings,

That he may find out the will of the Gods and
set it to music:
Nature is deity's hymn, folding the earth in a
song.

15

Poesy is, O reader, not merely the copy of
Nature;
Nature's voice she must win, breathing it into
a word;
But that word has Divinity's soul in the body of
Nature,
From whose lips you must catch inward the
strain of the God.

16

Often before have I rambled through fields in the
Spring, said the shepherd;
But the green grass-blade to me was but a blade
of green grass;
Or, I thought it was good for a spear of dry hay
in a bundle,
Which would nourish my flock when the bare
winter had come.
Now to my glance, as I wander around the green
Attic meadows,
A new being it springs suddenly up at my feet.

17

Poem I never could relish that babbled of Nymphs and the Muses;
Lifeless they were to the eye, meaningless unto the soul;
But in this soil they now rise as of old to the vision Hellenic,
They each moment are born, breathing, yea, speaking to me.
Seize them thou must as they spring into life in the trees, in the fountains;
Set them no longer to grind, bound to the treadmill of verse.
Leave them alone if thou art not able to merrily catch them,
Bathing in the lone brook, singing their note on the hills.

18

Gently the rill flows over white pebbles of Pentelic marble,
Into the Olives it winds vanishing under the leaves;
See the clear stream with a flow like the folds of the Pythian priestess,
As to the altar she goes hung on the thought of the God.

19

Winged are words, O Homer, but feathered from various pinions;

Some have the eagle's wing, darting adown on the prey;
Some have the buzzard's, but hark! altogether the most have the screech-owl's;
Be the small humming-bird's mine, always he hums while he sips.

20

Winged is ever thy word, O Homer; such is thy vision
That thou beholdest it fly, sped on its way by the Muse;
Winged thy word, O bard; and, propelled on the breath of thy music,
Soars aloft with a thought tuned to the flight of the spheres.

21

Poet is he who to speech transferring the image of Nature,
Therein hidden transfers also the form of the God.

22

This is Hellas, the thyme you can pluck from the stoniest hillside;
Thyme here grows from the rocks, thence all its fragrance it draws.

23

What is the highest of Nature, the noblest of things of the senses?
What but this body of life? said the fair Greek to himself.
Let it be trained until it become a mirror transparent
In whose movement you see all the fine work of the soul.

24

No, thy form was not made to be stretched on the cross of distortion,
But for the Grace's abode joined to Apollo's clear rhythm;
Still the Poet can hear, as he notes thy victorious movements
Hymning thy body's refrain, melody deep for his song.

25

'Tis the Barbarian's mark to behold his own shame in his body,
And to hide it in swathes lest it offend the clear eye;
But the Greek soul has purified body to motion of spirit
That the immortal Gods take it with joy as their own.

26

Tender verses I pluck on my path from the tip of each leaflet,
From enfolding soft buds sip I the dew of the morn,
Sweet little epigrams lightly I suck from the lips of each flowret,
All the sweet treasure I drip into a honeycomb rare
Made out of hundreds of cellules with geometric precision;
Still from the clear waxen fount gushes the heart of the flowers.

27

Slowly I climb to the top, the rest of the heights lie below me,
Which, as I looked from the plain, seemed very lofty and great;
Yonder I was, I reflect now, laboring joyfully upward,
There on a stone I sat down, taking repose from my toil.
Now I glance back from this seat where I rest, I write a short poem,
Brave little epigram, up — quickly advance to the top.

28

Many a new-born kid you may see on the rocks of Hymettus,
Dropped by the mother there suddenly touched with the pang
Ushering life into light; then quickly she turns to her offspring
With a fond gleam from her eye kindled by Nature's deep joy.
At a draught of milk from the udder young knees will stiffen,
Thousands of kids in their sport leap on the sides of the hills.

29

New Hymettian quarries of marble have lately been opened,
See the laborer there cleaning the rubbish away
Where was the cloister. At noontide in the calm shade of its ruins
He will nap for a time; this is its very last use.

30

On Hymettus thou still canst behold the remains of the quarries
Which for the marble were wrought, bringing it out to the sun;

Now deserted they lie, filled up with the rubbish of ages,
Yet beneath all the waste wait the old treasures for light.
Open the quarries once more now hid in the heart of Hymettus,
Bring out its crystalline stores, still it has temples and Gods.

31

Poesy dost thou find in thy strolls on rugged Hymettus?
Why, the mountain is bare, harvest it has but of stones.—
Yet the bee will find on these rocks the sweetest of honey;
Out of their caverns and creaks hives he will build for his stores.

32

We may behold the mythical world thou didst live in, O Homer,
From Hymettus the blue looking across toward Troy;
All the Gods are astir now, and, summoned to hold their assembly,
Rise in the sound of the sea, move in the song of the land;

And to me, the poor mortal, Hermes is bringing their message,
Each little thought of the heart is a light waft of the God.

33

Yonder I see that I strayed as I look from the top of the mountain,
Tarried too long for the flower, not long enough for the fruit
Of my journey to ripen in sunshine: double my error;
Still I had to stray there, if I would mount to this height.
Many the lower small summits that swell over graceful Hymettus,
Some with their blossoms and bees, some with their thistles and thorns.

34

In my ramble I went far astray in a gorge of Hymettus,
Now I see my mistake plain as the sun on yon rock,
And I wonder how I could lose the clear lines of this mountain,
All of which seem to direct straight to the beautiful goal.
What seems easy is hardest, what seems near is most distant,

Sunlit Hymettus, to-day thou art my image of life.

35

Two are the sides of Hymettus, O wanderer; steep and ungainly
Is the whole slope of the mount, when from fair Athens it turns;
Yet how graceful and gradual is the descent toward Athena's
Marble abode, where she lies resting on violet beds.
But deceive not thyself by the view, this way is more distant,
It to the temple doth lead which the wise Goddess indwells.

36

Yes, I saw the coarse goats as they fed on the top of Hymettus,
Browsing the live-long day on a mere bramble of thorns
Whose toothed leaves ran out to a point in a truculent briar;
Still the goats would devour leaflets and twigs with the spines.
How to live on the bramble that chokes up the ways of the Muses,
The example is here — one must be changed to a goat.

37

What! is it true that foul goats now feed on this honey-dewed mountain?
Yes; for the note of a Muse list to that sensual snort.
Here they too have been lodged, just where the high summit is highest,
And in the shadiest dell, under the pleasantest pine.
How do I know? thou askest. Hymettus is turned to a dung-hill,
That is the sign of the goat, feculent drops lie around.

38

The whole day like a goat you may browse on the leaves thorn-bordered,
Which now grow on the mount where all the Muses once sang;
Sprigs you may pluck by the handful in search of a savory morsel
Through all the cotes you may pass, there not a panspipe is found.
Turn then aside to the musical stream sent down from the ancients,
You will find the old mount full of bright flowers and song.

39

Oft have I strayed from the path, but always returned from my straying;
Often have I been lost till I discovered myself.
Fiercely I stormed through the weeds, I fought on my path with the brambles,
Burs I picked from my coat, thorns I pulled out of my flesh.
But as I wandered alone, not knowing whither I tended,
Flowers I plucked in the fields, fruits too I culled from the trees.
Labyrinthine Hymettus, one must be lost in thy windings,
In thy honeycomb lost, ere of thy sweetness he taste.

40

Epigrams, wake! ye seem to have fallen asleep or are sleepy;
Weave to a bower your forms over the wayfarer's path,
As he leaps on the stones and roams through the dells of the mountain:
Then on Hymettus' top lay the bright wreath ye have wound.

41

What is thy thought as thou strollest through hollows and hills of Hymettus?

Life is a honeycomb too, made up of millions of cells
Which are called moments of Time; perchance they are utterly empty,
But may with honey be filled from the sweet flowers of earth.
Every minute to-day is a void little cell, by the Gods to thee given,
Be now busy as bees, with a sweet deed fill the cell.

42

Now the height of Hymettus I touch, of my efforts the highest,
Always before have I stopped, worn by the difficult way.
From this spot I can see the whole plain stretched humbly below me,
Over whose equal expanse wildly I wandered to-day.
But the view that pleases me most, looking back on my pathway,
Is, I see over the heights which I once reached, and then left.

43

Now I look out on the world from the top of sunny Hymettus;
Far below me it lies, all its mad struggle unheard,

And its bounds on the farthest sea I hold in my vision;
How does it seem? you inquire. Look in these epigrams here.
Hundreds of mirrors I place them, always returning one image;
Though the facets be small, each will reflect the full form.

44

Overlaid with the gold of the sun is the top of the mountain,
To those treasures I wend, shunning mad Eros the while;
There is the softest caress of the Muse, and the pipe of the shepherd,
Soothing the wound of the heart in the repose of the hills.
But I soon shall return, again I shall love, I know it;
The sole freedom I have is to be thrall of the God.

45

Tell me what ails thee, O friend? Art mortal, hast surely the heart-ache;
Then go with me to-day, yonder are heights in the sun;
Bathe the still-ebbing wound of thy heart in the quiet of hill-tops,

There alone thou canst be with the great
Healer, the God.

46

Yesterday green was the mountain, but to-day it
is hoary;
Snow has fallen above, covered its temples
with grey;
Yesterday thou wert a youth upspringing in
bloom to the heavens,
Ah, to-day thou art old, gone through thy time
at a bound.
See how age is barely divided from youth by a
snow-storm,
Crushed into one wild night all of thy years are
a dream.

47

Chill is the wind that bears me along toward
snowy Hymettus,
The lone shepherd now comes down from the
mount with his flocks,
He has put up his panspipe, snow has palsied his
fingers,
Flowers no longer will bloom, springing above
the rude rock
Into the sunlight; every bee has fled from the
hill-side;
Poesy freezes to-day; Poet too shivers along.

48

Round the top of the mountain are whirling the flakes of the snow-storm,
While below in the plain softly are playing the beams;
Darkly Hymettus doth muffle his head in his wind-woven mantle,
Lying serene on her couch Parthenon still has the sun.

49

Æschylus saw yon sea when he spoke of its numberless laughter;
Now its face you behold sparkling with millions of smiles
Merrily racing each other in sport to the Isthmian race-course,
The great games of the God still they keep up at his shore.
But look deep in the water and watch its laughing reflection,
There the Olympian world dimples with smiles in the waves.

50

Look at this cairn, the monument built by others before me
Right on the top of the mount, far overlooking the vale,

Till the glancing victorious sea, whose flutter of wavelets
Plays round Salamis still pæans of warriors of old.
Touch with thine eye the great heart of the sea in the distance,
Thou its deep beating wilt feel as if a battle were there.

51

Clear are the lines of this mountain, like to the forms of the sculptor,
And transparent the air softly embracing its curves;
Up here I stand, not a soul in the plain there below can behold me,
Still in Greek sunshine I stand, that is my only reward.

52

Why were the sides of this mountain, when they were rolled into ridges,
Fixed by the hand of the God just at their tenderest swell?
Look, you will see the reason. There the broad folds of the ancients
Sculptured over its slant sweep with their trail in the plain.

53

This book of epigrams, what shall I call it? A handful of pebbles
Gathered in my ascent from the rough side of the mount.
And that writing I scratch on all of them? That is my versemark;
With some faith thou must try, if the device thou wilt read.

54

Here are my stones to the cairn upreared by my dear predecessors,
Whose great names can be read, writ on the tablets of rock;
On the pile I throw down my pebbles, each one is scribbled
With some legend faint, visible scarce to the crowd.
Still my mark on them will hereafter be always deciphered
By a few climbers; to-day leave me this comfort at least.

55

Shepherds were piping and calling to-day all over the mountain,
Far asunder they were, no one his fellow could see;

Still each heard and answered the other, in words far-resounding,
Which in harmonious waves played through the tortuous dells.
In my own native speech I endeavored to give them an answer,
Set to the music I heard there on the pastoral heights.

56

See the shepherd who leans on yon bush, I happen to know him;
Clothes are the skins of his flock, rude is the staff in his hand;
Plain is his speech, but the word bears in it some image of nature,
And if he strike up a song, clear it will flow from his heart.
Ears which hear his music, eyes which pierce his mantle,
Find the man within, find too the beautiful soul.

57

Up! the snow has fallen to-day and covered Hymettus,
See how he shimmers aloft next to the clouds of the sky!
Now we must go and behold him once more in new crystalline drapery
That falls over his sides, like the white folds of the Gods.

58

Shaggy capote of the shepherd is snowy with fleeces of cloudland,
There he stands mid his herd, white as the sheep that he drives;
But just look at the goat, the black goat, to a fleece now whitened,
Yet with a ray of the sun he will again be a goat.

59

"High-toned society I cannot find in your epigrams; bless me,
What a vulgar set! shepherds, and goats, and yourself."
Humble we are, I confess, although, if you scan us more closely,
You will behold what is, not is pretending to be.

60

Once I met a small bee in my walk on the top of Hymettus;
On a bare rock he sat, as I bent over his seat.
What! is it truth or delusion? From stones extractest thou honey
Famed of old as to-day, delicate drop of the world?
Friend, I hail thee! fly not away, I gladly would know thee;

Teach me how sweetness to draw out of the heart of the rock.

61

Here the old cloister is lying, now fallen to ruin and romance,
Quiet it rests in the vale where meditation once dwelt;
So the cloister is passing the way of the temple and column,
In it no longer is heard prayer ascending on high.
But the Nymph is still here, and she will remain here forever,
Laughing out of this spring, as it leaps down the fresh stones.

62

Over the fountain the layers of rock rise up in graceful disorder,
Temple built by the Nymphs in a wild fanciful play
For those youths whose worship was sport and whose sport was a worship;
Here by the cloister it lies, just the same temple of old.
This is a seat of the Nymphs, and there in the rocks are grimaces
Which they in mockery make mocking the vanishing monks.

63

How it may be with thee on this spot, O reader,
I know not,
But as for me I rejoice, seeing the joy of this
fount
And of these rocks still filled with the happy re-
minders of fable;
In these ruinous walls too I rejoice — let them
fall.

64

O Pindarus, one finds in the golden strands of
thy network,
Intricate yet full of grace, all the sweet music
of forms —
Grecian youths, as they strove in the games or
leapt in the race course,
As in the contest or dance wound they fair
shapes to a hymn.

65

Fervid, O high-worded bard, is thy worship of
youthful Apollo,
God of wisdom and song blended in music to
one;
God of all the high harmonies, both the inner and
outer;
Let me too him revere, softly attuned to his
strain.

Hark! he hath a deep power which sets the full soul in vibration,
To some melody pure that is beyond our own selves;
But when the God has withdrawn his touches of innermost music,
Back to the earth we fall into unresonant clay.

66

Give me thy melody, give me thy theme, both flowing together,
Word is one with the thought, form is the same as the soul;
Legend transparently bears in the flow of thy music its moral,
Ever the mode thou dost sing one is with what thou dost sing.

67

Theban eagle, now thou hast shown me where is the summit
Of the culture of Greece, long by me sought with much toil;
Harmony is its whole name, deep-woven through cunningest measures,
All of whose strands intertwine into one garment of song.

68

Still to-day you can see the white folds of the antique peplos,
As they fall down the limbs, rounded and full, of the maid;
And the man you behold as he strides in white tunic of linen,
Showing the shapely turns which are our body's own song.
Look at yon form, and know why marble was taken by sculpture
To express the high deed done by the Great Man or God.

69

Even in Hellas the good and the bad oft balance each other;
Love I the old in the new, hate I the new in the old.
Pleasant the song of the larks as they trill in the old Attic meadows,
Hateful the sound of the gun, modern intruder in Greece.
Off fly the larks, on the air float shreds of melodies ancient,
Clear ancestral refrains, sung every day in this field.
Over my head in a strife with the breeze is whizzing the bullet,

Gun and powder and ball, why do you ravage this air?
Your sharp music I know the chiefest note of our era,
Still I shall follow the larks back from the new to the old.

70

Wings I attach in the sun to my words, bright butterfly flappers,
That to each flower they flit over the slant of the mount;
Often not more do they bear on their breath than a pin-point of honey;
Reader, out of the word thou the sweet drop must express.

71

Look! on this side Parthenon lies, on that side Hymettus,
If thou canst hear with the eye, both of them chime to one note;
The clear temple doth echo along all the lines of the mountain,
And the mountain of stone throbs into temples unbuilt.

72

Helius leans now before me upon the round ridge of Hymettus,

Just for a moment he rests ere he mount up in the skies.
Why doth he gaze so intently across to yon hillock behind me?
There the Parthenon lies lit to a blaze in his glance.
Golden the bridge that he builds in the air from summit to temple,
Over the radiant span flit all the forms of the Gods.
Under this bridge of his beams I walk in the shade of the valley,
Slowly the bright structure breaks, now it doth fall round my head.

73

Round this mountain encircles the day, the season, the lifetime;
Butterfly, bee, and man act out their deed on its breast.
Of its sweetness thou mayest be able to suck up a mouthful,
If thou a butterfly art, seeking the food of a day.
But if truly a bee thou art, thou wilt gather a hiveful,
Or a lifeful thou wilt, if thou art truly a man.

74

Satirist Hornet his poison don't bear in his tongue nor his forehead,
Nature has hinted her mind by the mere place of his sting.

75

Hornets are reared on Hymettus, I saw the yellow-ringed body,
Poison will poison distill from the pure heart of the flower.
In my wrath I struck with my hat at the daring intruder;
This was the voice: Have a care lest thou a hornet be too.

76

Cast an ocean of brine on one little beam of Apollo,
Still it will glow as before, dance on the envious surge;
Such is merit, O friend. Though calumny darken its lustre.
It will not be put out, even will beam on the foe.

77

Yonder is Athens, it seemeth as if from this height I can touch it;
Boldly I walk down the hill when a deep gorge cuts me off;

Painfully then I return and try from the top a new pathway,
Till I by brambles am stopped ever in view of the town.
Now I go back and spy out the stores of Hymettus before me,
Hearing its song on my way, soon I to Athens am come.

78

This is the Pnyx, you say, whence spoke the great orator Attic,
Still may be heard from these stones eloquent echoes of old;
This broad platform hewn from the rock is a voice adamantine
That through the ages resounds warning the races of men.
Gone are the dwellings and temples and men that crowded this summit,
But the voice has remained — hark! it is speaking to-day.

79

Only behold this stone of the Pnyx, altogether the greatest,
Though the others are large, larger than elsewhere, you think.
Here it rests in the wall, it was raised by the hand of a Titan,

To outlast all the strokes in the great fall of a world.
Let us call it Demosthenes, rock of perdurable grandeur,
Orator now on his stand, uttering still his great word.

80

Mid these ruins, O wanderer, this should be thy first lesson,
To be able to hear speech without lips, without words;
Study the language of stones, put together their old broken story,
Hear their destroyer speak too, smiting them down in his wrath.

81

Athens, I fear thee; thou wert the favorite haunt of the virgin,
Who has given thee name, who thy chief temple indwelt;
Stern and severe is thy glance, O Pallas, thou maid of cool reason,
Knowledge and art are thy gifts, scorning the light play of Love.
Venus is hateful to thee, and all the lorn lover's caprices,
This I must not forget, as I thy favor implore.
Still on this mountain you often can hear the soft trill of panspipe,

Notes of it rise on the air tuning the slope to its strain,
One they are with the sunshine over the tranquilest ridges,
One with the hum of the bee, one with the beat of the heart.

82

The cicada, long famous for music, I saw on a grass-blade,
He was the last of his race fallen on days of decline;
The green freshness of Spring had changed to the dullness of Autumn,
Scarce could he balance his wings, and he no longer could sing.
But his shape he retained, and all of his ancient armor,
A tall helmet he wore mounted by double high crests;
Long was the fall of his robe which covered his tapering body,
Draping a hint of the Gods: graceful were bended his limbs.
Here in view of the city, whose eye is the fane of Athena,
Antique shadows he casts, dim like the old in the new.
But, O Anacreon, let him now sing as he sang for thy measures,

A new life he will have, echoing notes of thy lyre.

83

Ah, discordant the sound I now hear in a dale of Hymettus!
'Tis the Byzantine twang that from yon chapel doth come.
That is surely the sound which killed old Pan in this mountain,
And it would any God, daily to hear such a snarl.

84

Many a sound is hateful — the grating of hinges in dungeons,
And the clanking of chains, also the human shrill screech;
But the clanking, the grating, the screeching is sweetest of music
To the screed of the priest mid the Greek hills on a morn.

85

Who were my visitors as I reposed on the hill of Colonus?
Butterflies, birds and bees came with their message of joy.
But here cometh a blind old man who is led by a maiden.
What does he say? What she? Look in the poet of old.

Œdipus, thou art the man who always appears to the stranger,
Here thou didst wander in life, here thou wert ta'en to the Gods.

86

Still you may note the olive and grape, the plantain and cypress,
Through the Athenian vale, roaming the river along;
Still at noon you may see old Cephissus rise out his stream-bed,
Secretly water the trees that are enwreathing his banks;
And the gracefullest nymphs are still frisking amid yonder thicket,
Now from this height you may watch all of their frolicsome sport.

87

Sophocles, this was thy hill on whose summit transpired the wonders
Which thou didst see in old age, but with a vision beyond.
Round the hill is woven a garland of silvery olives,
Playing to-day in the breeze, pretty reminders of song.
Peering amid the grey foliage gleams the bare top of Colonus,

Like a poetical brow, aged, though fresh in its joy.
Gone are thy temples and shrines, O hillock; gone are thy Gods too,
Still thou by Nature art crowned with the green wreath of the bard.

88

What did you see, O stranger, to-day on the hill of the Muses,
Seeking the joyous old haunts where the sweet Sisters once dwelt? —
Goats, I saw nothing but goats that were browsing the thyme of the hill-slopes,
And there was nothing beside, which could be seen with the eye.
As I sat and watched their ungraceful and dirty caprices,
Soon the danger I felt there of becoming a goat.

89

Long I sought on that hill for a trace of some musical shepherd,
Tuning his pipe in the sun to the soft trill of his heart;
Flocks I sought for calmly reposing in patches of sunshine,
Maidens I looked for in vain, sporting with lambs on the rocks.

All the hill-side was bare, not a bush, not a flower or thyme-stalk,
Whose mild fragrance was once sweetly distilled into verse.
Pan is dead, the shepherd and shepherdess thence have vanished,
Sheep are now left to themselves till they be shorn for their fleece.

90

From the Nine Sisters this hill is named; they dwelt on its summit,
And from the height they attuned all the horizon around
To their music; unto its cadences rose up the temples,
Choruses fair tripped forth, swaying the body to song;
The high forms of the Gods and Goddesses stepped out of marble,
Speech was an ecstasy sweet, flowing to measures of time;
All the deeds of the doers, all the words of the speakers
Were one strain of the Muse singing in Athens of old.

91

Up, companion, climb to the top of the hill of the Muses,

Thence you will note in the plain city and temple and sea;
And if you look long enough, you will witness the birth of Athena
Rising up with her town cast in the mold of her brain.

92

From this top where we lie, let us view yon theater's ruin,
Carefully build it anew, which all the Muses once built,
When they had on this hill their temple of far-glancing glory,
And inspired the voice which is still heard in those walls.
Piece together their fragments, list to the notes that they echo,
You will hear a vast rhythm setting to music the world.

93

Athens, many thy violet hills, and all of them sacred!
Each one, however small, raises its head to the skies
High as Olympus; take, O friend, the next path of the ascent;
It will lead to the top where is the home of a God.

94

O the shy Muses, I wonder if they to my love give requital!
Many adorers they have, few are invited to stay;
Some get a glance or a smile, and some get a word from their heart-depths,
But the most are dismissed — suitors who loiter outside.
Scarce in a century will the coy Muse fall in love with a mortal,
Breathing her soul into his, making one passionate life
That must break into song and tune all the world to its keynote,
When we see Nature herself joining her voice to the choir.
Could I be sure I were loved as much as I love ye, O Sisters!
Epigrams never would cease welling up into the day.
Give me the meed of my love back, be thou a Muse or maiden,
Give the reciprocal kiss, lips are made two to be one.

95

Parthenon, mid thy deep joy thou showest a still deeper sorrow,
Fate has smitten thee too, as it smote heroes of old.

Yes, I catch thy sweet smile which gladdens the sea and the valley,
But I behold, too, the wound which has been struck in thy side.
Thou like Œdipus, Hercules, thou the Greek temple, art tragic,
Ruin heroic thou art, beautiful just in thy fall.
O the eternal delight that sings out thy fragments of marble!
O the eternal pain from the pierced heart of thy stones!

96

Here, at thy shrine, O Pan, near the stream of little Ilissus,
Gratefully to thee I give all of the wanderer's arms:
Namely, this faithful staff which stoutly supported my footsteps
Where are the mountain haunts trod by the shepherd alone;
And these shoes too I offer, now torn by the rocks of the hillside
As I sought thy retreat mid the deep forest and glen.
By their aid and by thine, O Pan, I have ended my journey,
Take now the signs of my art, grant me, I pray thee, repose.

Maid of Athens.

In the bed of Ilissus is lying Calirrhoe limpid,
Heaving her watery breast still to the God of the stream;
Thither I wander to hear from the Nymph her melodies ancient,
Fain would I catch her sweet note sung to the fablers of old.
As I sat on a stone and looked at the gush of the fountain,
Came with Junonian tread maiden of figure antique;
White was the ripple of folds as they flowed down the lines of her body,
Broken to waves at each step just as she bended the knee.
She was bearing an amphora ancient of gracefulest model,

Wherein to pour the fresh drink throbbed from the heart of the earth;
With the cup in her hand she was dipping it out of the fountain,
Filling the jar at her side with a bright sparkle of pearls;
To me she handed a draught from the flood of Calirrhoe's vintage,
While the wealth of her eyes, spendthrift, she poured on the ground.
Nor would she look at me even while daintily doing me service,
Ever she kept at her work busily whirling the cup;
How I longed to speak but a word — she forbade me in silence,
Still I read what she said written in movement and form.
Forward she leaned her lithe body that turned to the outline of Graces,
High she swung her white arm bared to the shoulder of dress,
Cupful she whirled after cupful into the mouth of the vessel,
While her melodious breath uttered a song to the rhythm,
As it softly was flowing from motion of hand and of body,
So that attuned to one note seemed both her form and her lips.

O the beautiful concord when song is a bodily movement,
And the movement a song hymned from the heart in each act!
See now the dead earthen amphora wet with Callirrhoe's finger!
Shapes spring out of its clay born at a touch of her hand;
What was a dull, burnt side of a jar, quite lifeless and vacant,
Now with action is filled, action of figures divine;
Pallas I see rise up at her city, in bearing majestic,
To a mortal she speaks, son of Laertes I deem.
Then is pictured a maid, Nausicaa, near to a fountain,
To her Ulysses appears, wanderer mighty of old,
And he prays her to lead him the way to the wonderful city,
Home of the beautiful forms, work too itself of the Gods.
Far he has come on his journey from mythical lands by the sunset,
Seeking his earliest hearth, where once his spirit was born;
"Maiden," I cried, "Oh stay till I read what is told in that picture,

It is speaking to me, telling the word of my fate.
I must know what it says, must spell its oracular letters
That have been made by the strokes moved from the hand of a God.
List! all its persons I hear, they address me as an acquaintance;
To their group I belong, though I stand out in the air.
They have come to me here by the side of Calirrhoe's mirror,
Thou art their guide to this spot, answer them now in thy speech!''
Not a word she said in reply, yet in motion responsive
Softly she uttered her heart taking the jar in her arms.
Look, the maiden has raised to her head that amphora ancient,
There it stands a high crown, wreathed with clear shapes of old Time;
She, with life in her movement, is giving her life to its figures,
She is one of them there, though she be here too to-day.
See the old and the new now vanishing into each other,
Interplaying their forms down from Olympus to Earth,

And from the Earth to Olympus again, in the sport of their beauty,
Her they are giving their grace, them she is giving her breath.
Sketched on the air she is moving both into and out of that picture,
Dropped from the outlines of art into the movement of life.
Who can distinguish which is the modern, which is the ancient?
Which is the person of stone? Which is the being with breath?
Is it the draught of thy stream that cunningly changes my vision?
Or thy mirror perchance calmly reflecting a world?
Such are the forms that rise in thy fountain, Calirrhoe limpid,
Thy clear waters still show all the old shapes of the bard,
And transfigure them into the youngest look of the living,
See! I am thirsty again! Give me a drink of thy spring.

Hymn to Pallas.

Pallas, O Pallas of Athens, I stroll through thy beautiful temple,
Which has been built in this land doubly by Nature and Art,
Fair white Parthenon yonder is not thy sole structure, O Goddess,
Attica all is thy house, reared to the uppermost hills.
See! this Athenian landscape is ever a glorious poem,
Which from each spot you can read all the long day in your walk.
Radiant verses are gleaming like falchions aloft on the summits,
Mighty heroical lines lighten through opaline skies,
Heaving hexameters roll from the rise and the fall of the sea swell,

Tender love epigrams lisp cadences low in between.
Plain and mountain and sea are a garland of splendor majestic,
Circling the head of old Time laid in fair Attica's lap;
Foliage, herd, and ship make a line of a musical measure
Moving with harmonies sweet into one cast of the eye.
O the transfusion of sound! the transfiguration of vision!
Every object of sense flashes to letters of light;
Brightest of scripture is writ on the earth with a pencil of sunbeams,
And the white folds of the clouds drop down unrolling a scroll;
Many a line of old Homer is cut on the burnished horizon,
Words of the Muse built of stars nightly you read in the sky,
Strains of high singers flow still from the liquid Ionian heavens,
Out of each fountain are heard songs set with fancies of old,
Weeds and thorns and brambles are hung with emeralds precious,
Pebbles begin underfoot suddenly turning to pearls;

Wisdom, the grave old sage, is diamonded over and over
As he walks through the grove, bearing the thought of the world.
Ancient Pentelicus yonder is speaking a word to the sculptor,
Rising to statue from stone, filling the dome of the sky;
Happy Hymettus transfuses to song all the dew of his honey,
As he sweeps to the plain from the clear home of the Gods.
Yet this Nature is but the outermost garb of the poem,
Which the body doth grace hinting the glories within,
Nobly suggesting the soul in the refluent folds of green drapery,
As it flowing through vales rolls to the tops of the hills.
Only look up; you will see, wherever you are, the fair temple
Which in the center is placed, raying out streams from its height:
Fountain perennial, welling above an Athenian hillock,
Thence overflowing Greek hills into the stream of the world;
Waves it is sending of translucent smiles in eternal processions,

Thousands of years it has filled all of this plain with its joy
Up to the mountainous rim that lies on the earth like a garland,
And embosoms the fane in a long happy caress.
Cincture of pillars by distance becomes a gay zone of Greek maidens,
Festively dressed in white folds, reaching each other the hand.
See the fair chorus of columns now dancing around on the summit,
The full joy of the feast flows to the ends of the plain,
Speaking afar to the wayfarer lonely, evangels of beauty,
Moving to measures of song under melodious skies.
Thither, O wanderer, haste from the vale, from the mountain most distant,
Haste on the wings of the ship over the islanded seas,
Aught is reaching for thee far out of the heart of the temple,
Fair as the youth of the world, wise as the old age of Time,
Drawing thee up the Acropolis bound in fleet fetters of sunbeams,
Till thou art set on its top from the wide world's other side;

Pass now into the temple, thou wilt behold the high Goddess,
Where she sits on her throne, seen by her worshiper true;
She will show thee her beauty, she will tell thee her wisdom,
She is the landscape's heart, heart of the poem is she.

NOTE.

It has seemed to me that a little note appended to the present book and telling a few facts about it, would be welcome to those readers who are most interested in it and in the series of works of which it forms a part.

The first fact which I would like to make known is that the book, at the date of the present writing (April, 1892), is about fourteen years from the period of its origin. It began to live in me and to start into expression during the spring of 1878, which I passed at Rome, viewing palaces, ruins, statues, and all the remains of antiquity, even down to small fragments of ancient marble. The old world had received from Time a blow that had shivered it to pieces, still these pieces would come together for the patient inquirer, and deliver with distinctness their message. Every day would bring some new utterance, broken perchance, yet suggesting, if not completely voicing, the antique spirit.

It was for me a time of supreme happiness, of reconstruction within and without — a Roman spring in the soul. I was driven off by the hot weather to the north, but in the fall I returned, and saw again with delight my ancient acquaintances.

But the first intoxication of joy had begun to wane, I could not help feeling that there was something else behind and beyond Rome, especially antique Rome, as we still see it to-day. Looked into more closely, all the Roman stones — temples, statues, reliefs, even the triumphal arches and the Coliseum — were pointing to another land and people as their origin. Many works of antiquity very plainly spoke of captivity and servitude. The Roman conqueror subjected not

merely the Greek State, but Greek Art, which thus became a slave in Rome. Hence a reaction came over me, and with it an intense longing to go back, or, better, to go forward, to Hellas. The necessity was strong, indeed imperative, and so again I started toward the rising sun.

From these two experiences the reader will derive the two portions of the present book, *Ecce Roma* and *Epigrammatic Voyage* — the stay at Rome and the transition to Hellas.

Such is, in general, the origin of these utterances in verse. They began to spring up when I touched classic soil; they moved of themselves into their measure without any conscious violence on my part; the view of nature, the sight of the objects, the voice of the old world still speaking in monuments and in language were the first instigators, and must bear the chief blame. Such a deed I had not thought of beforehand; I had never tried a classical meter till land, sea, mountain and sky gave the beat which could then be heard vibrating through all ancient art and literature.

Still, I ought to add that not all of these poems (there are nearly two hundred and fifty, short and long) were finished or even written down on classical soil. For years after my return home the mood would come back at intervals, and would insist upon expression in the present metrical form, a very solitary note in English song. At such times whatever was old, was often touched up afresh, and even new, hitherto unconscious phases of the Greco-Roman journey would shoot into some unexpected image or thought. As late as two years ago, the antique mood revived with no little tyranny, and for a while drove out every other kind of work, especially that which had to do with the present. So the old road must be traveled over again, along which fresh flowers are always blooming. This book, accordingly, is made up of many journeyings into classic lands, yet is but one journey; each time has left its trace upon the poems, which ought thereby not to lose but to reach their unity and completeness.

But life is short and the traveler at last must rest at his inn. The period has arrived when the present book must be closed and gotten rid of by its author, who has finally to send forth the child of his brain with a hope in his heart and a blessing on his lips. It is to take its place in the series of works and of long-continued attempts which have sought to regain the ancient Hellenic inheritance, and to transmit the same to our Western world. Classical studies seem just at the present to be passing through an eclipse. But in some form the spirit of that antique life must be recovered and renewed, being an integral element in the development of man from barbarism to culture, and remaining still to-day the most beautiful manifestation that has yet appeared on our planet, since it is just the manifestation of beauty.

The immediate view of nature and antiquity in Greece and Italy of to-day — the climate, the landscape, the monuments, the works of art — called forth primarily what is here written. Still there were certain literary influences and associations, ancient and modern, which played into the mood, and which I, looking back through all these years, can discern with some degree of clearness. The three chief ones I shall point out to my reader, who may possibly desire at some time to make an excursion on the same road.

1. The first of these literary influences both in time and degree was the Greek Anthology. I had never looked into this vast collection of verses which image Hellenic life for more than a thousand years in its most subtle aspects, till I reached Rome, where some allusion or quotation led me to get the small pocket edition of Tauchnitz, which then became my handbook and guide to the ancient world, nor is it wholly laid aside yet. In all my wanderings through Italy and Greece it was my chosen companion, whom I would especially recommend to my successors as the most delightful and best informed *cicerone* in Heathendom.

Very naturally there was a strong desire to make

the epigrams of the Anthology speak my mother-tongue and yet have them retain their Greek mood and drapery. The first and the indispensable requisite was that they should keep as far as possible their ancient meter. The usual English translations of the Greek epigram were iambic, in rhymed couplets or quatrains. I can truly say, I could not endure them. Even when they were faithful to the sense and poetic in language, the classic fragrance and form were all gone, for me at least. On the soil of England or America they will have to be tolerated, for that tremendous all-devouring Anglo-Saxon individuality which threatens to swallow the whole world, asserts itself also in versification and is inclined to permit only its own to be. German translations of Greek poetry, and specially of the Anthology, are far more sympathetic on the whole, though often rough and formal.

Hence arose the attempt to preserve in English the metrical form of the Greek epigram, as far as a language using accent instead of quantity would permit. Any other kind of verse will not answer, whatever be thought of the present attempt. "English ears are not used to this measure" it is said; English ears will yet have to become used to it, and let Classic numbers live in the English tongue. So much by way of prophecy, which has as yet, be it observed, no fixed date of fulfillment.

This book, however, is not a translation, nor is it an imitation or even reproduction simply. It narrates my own thoughts and experiences; it is as modern as I am, in spite of its antique form; it emphatically belongs to the present, and, whatever be its merit or want of merit, it could have been written only by a man belonging to the last half of the 19th century. An author has to put his own time and his own personality into his work. To try to write a Greek tragedy or a Latin ode just as Sophocles or Horace would have written it, is, I hold, a puerile business, and is, besides, quite impossible. Still antique forms

may be employed, but the matter, the content must be modern. In the old the new must appear all the brighter and truer for its vase. Of this complete interfusion and happy marriage between the antique and modern in poetry there is a supreme example, which the reader will note as the second literary influence observable in the present book.

2. This is Goethe. Of all the men of Teutonic blood who have visited Italy, he is the one who has shown the most feeling for the old world and greatest mastery over its form of expression, yet without losing himself in mere classical imitation. In his *Iphigenia*, in his *Roman Elegies*, and in his *Epigrams* after the Greek manner, he employs the antique form, yet it is alive, it belongs to the present also; he shows himself the most ancient as well as the most modern man, the truly universal poet.

Goethe is, therefore, the genius who has made the antique live again, and has thus surpassed antiquity itself. Not, however, by simply going back to the old ages does he accomplish this, but by living wholly in his own age. Sometimes he is called an old pagan; such he is, but he is also a youth of to-day, full of the pulse-beat of his time, even in his classical transformations. All great poets have the same trait; they are the first and the last, a kind of Alpha and Omega of human spirit.

3. Another influence was that of the Latin elegiac poets. Greece stirred up even the old practical Roman to verse-making, not naturally his vocation. I was particularly attracted to Propertius, who has given a Greco-Roman setting of Art and Mythology to his love for Cynthia, and who undoubtedly influenced Goethe.

Still I shall have to confess that the Latin poets do not mean much to me poetically. They had to transfuse the elusive Hellenic spirit into an idiom cognate to Greek indeed, but in some respects harder to break into a supple instrument of poetic freedom than German or English. The imitation and formalism one always feels in Latin poetry, even when it is subtle

and elegant. For me Goethe stands nearer the heart of the Hellenic world than any Roman poet, and utters it in a more vital way. Still; in modern Rome the old heathen poets of Rome ought to be read and understood anew.

All these different literary utterances, however, the Greek, the Roman, the German, are but transformations of one and the same thing, that which is called the antique spirit, though it is quite as modern as it is ancient. They all strike one key-note at bottom, whatever be the place, time or tongue. Moreover the same key-note can be heard to-day in classic lands by the sympathetic ear attuned to nature and art, which must be the fountain-head of any genuine poetic expression. Not the written word of the past but that which lies behind the written word and creates it, is the mighty demiurge who is always transforming himself into new shapes and whose re-incarnations in Time, by means of the letter set down in writing, give us what we call Literature.

To the above explanatory remarks I may add that *Delphic Days*, though finished long before the present book with its two parts, properly follows it and constitutes the third and final part of this classical journey.

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